

Sect M2

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

UNCLASSIFIED

8007

WAR DIARY

German Naval Staff Operations Division

NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
ARCHIVES
RECEIVED
JUL 25 1950
copy number 182

1 copy to Log - Dest'd

PART A VOLUME 61

SEPTEMBER 1944

DECLASSIFIED IN DDG FORM OF 3 MAY 1978, ERM
DECLASSIFICATION OF WWII RECORDS

UNCLASSIFIED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

UNCLASSIFIED

WAR DIARY OF THE GERMAN NAVAL STAFF
(Operations Division)

PART A
September 1944

Chief of Staff, Naval Staff:	Admiral Meisel
Chief, Operations Division, Naval Staff:	Rear Admiral Meyer

DECLASSIFIED IN ACCORDANCE WITH
DISSEMINATION BY 1045 10/12/05

Volume 61

begun: 1 September 1944
closed: 15 September 1944

UNCLASSIFIED

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

1871

1872

1873

1874

1875

1876

1877

1878

OFFICE OF NAVAL INTELLIGENCE

Washington, D.C.

Foreword

1. The Office of Naval Intelligence has undertaken to translate important parts of the War Diary of the German Naval Staff. The present volume, entitled War Diary of the German Naval Staff, Operations Division, Part A, Volume 61 is the fifteenth one of the series to appear. Other volumes will follow shortly.
2. The War Diaries, Part A, are important because they contain a day by day summary of the information available to the German Naval Staff and the decisions reached on the basis thereof. Together with the Fuehrer Conferences on Matters Dealing with the German Navy, 1939, 1945, and the Fuehrer Directives, 1939, 1945, which have been published by this office, the War Diaries should provide valuable material for the study of naval problems arising from total war. The War Diary, Part A, is also a useful index to the German Naval Archives of World War II; references may be found in the microfilm library of Naval Records and Library.
3. Due to the cost of publication, only a limited number of copies could be made; it is therefore desirable that the copies which have been distributed are made available to other offices which may be interested.

Washington, D.C.
1948

1 Sept. 1944

Items of Political Importance.

The Polish Government in exile sent a memorandum to Moscow suggesting the formation of a new Government supported by the Communists and the conclusion of a Russian-Polish alliance. Furthermore it is rumored that the memorandum deals with the principles on which Russian-Polish relations shall be based in the future and with the steps necessary for the final settlement of the boundaries.

According to the German official news agency, all members of the Croatian Cabinet unfriendly towards Germany were removed and replaced. Vice Admiral Steinfl was made Minister of War.

Bulgaria has closed the Bulgarian-Turkish border.

It was officially announced in Cairo that, at present, there is not even a remote possibility of armistice negotiations between the Anglo-American Governments and Bulgaria. Upon questioning, Hull expressed similar sentiments. The Moscow press is continuing its attacks on Bulgaria.

According to a report from Ankara in the Daily Mail of 31 Aug., the Finnish Government has decided to withdraw from the war at once and to begin armistice negotiations with Russia. According to Reuter, the steps taken by Mannerheim in this respect permit the hope that comparatively acceptable terms may be obtained.

Commander in Chief, Navy went to Fuehrer Headquarters in the evening of 31 Aug.

Conference on the Situation with the Chief, Naval Staff at 1115.

I. At 2115 on 31 Aug. the Naval Attache at Helsinki sent a report according to which the German Ambassador was informed by the Finnish Foreign Minister in the evening of 31 Aug. that contact has been established with the Soviet Union by way of Sweden. This contact has existed for several days. He is not permitted to say more at the present moment. The future will show what the results will be. The Finnish Parliament is said to have been convoked for 1 Sept. This information has been transmitted to Naval Command, Baltic Sea and to Admiral, Eastern Baltic. According to a further report of the Naval Attache, Finnish shipping was notified that all sailings will be cancelled after 1500 on 31 Aug. This news lacks confirmation.

CONFIDENTIAL

1 Sept. 1944

The Naval Staff, Operations Division has notified the Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters, the Armed Forces High Command, the Army General Staff with copy to Naval Command, Norway.

II. Naval Staff, Quartermaster General.

The personnel of the 1st PT Boat Flotilla in the Black Sea is being recalled to Swinemuende for reassignment.

PT boats intended for delivery to Rumania are being shipped to Wilhelmshaven.

Reichsminister Speer orders all supply depots west of the West Wall to be removed.

Naval Staff, Quartermaster General considers it expedient to finish construction of torpedo boats in Dutch shipyards at an accelerated pace in order to be able to remove to Germany as many vessels as possible.

III. Chief, Naval Intelligence Division.

According to the Reich Security Central Office, Finnish journalists in Stockholm reported on 30 Aug. that Finnish peace negotiations have now, after completion of Finnish-Swedish conferences, entered upon a decisive stage. Sweden is going to take upon herself a large share of providing Finland with food; she will furnish materials and credits for reconstruction, and will guarantee the money to be paid to the Soviet Union in compensation for war damages inflicted. These negotiations are of greatest significance for Finland. Without a very strong backing by Sweden, Finland cannot look forward to a special peace treaty. Sweden, on her part, is willing to make sacrifices in the interest of Nordic collaboration. To accomplish this a more severe rationing of certain foods is necessary. No official contact between Moscow and Helsingfors has been established, but purely private contact via Stockholm-Moscow. The Russian peace terms as previously reported are:

CONFIDENTIAL

1 Sept. 1944

1. Restoration of the boundaries of 1941.
2. Military bases must be provided.
(The Russians have shown consideration for the Finns by not asking for inland bases but solely for bases along the southern coast.)
3. Regulation of the northern Finnish boundary in the sector around Petsamo at the conclusion of peace. The Finns are convinced that they will lose Petsamo.
4. Line of demarcation in northern Finland (German troops).
5. Demobilization of the Finnish Army. These questions, very important to Mannerheim, have not yet been decided; this is probably the reason why direct negotiations between Moscow-Helsingfors have not yet taken place. Finland is very strongly influenced by developments in the Balkans, especially by the action of Rumania, which greatly strengthened the movement for peace. Furthermore, developments in the Baltic States are of decisive significance for Finland.

In a Restricted Circle.

IV. Army Situation.

Western Front:

The rearguard actions of the 7th Army and 5th Armored Army were eliminated by the strong tank forces of the enemy who reached Amiens in the early hours of 31 Aug. The staff of the 7th Army and the General of the Armored Forces, Eberbach, were captured.

Amiens was taken by the enemy with the aid of terrorist units. At the same time, the enemy penetrated the defenses of the reinforcing divisions between Amiens and Bray sur Somme and advanced as far as Albert. All available forces have been put into the field to push the British back across the Somme. The remnants of both armies have orders to build up a defensive front on the other side of the Somme.

1 Sept. 1944

In the afternoon, enemy armored forces have also advanced in the Laon-Rethel area towards the north, and reached Vervins. Fighting is still going on; the situation is not clear.

In the sector of the 1st Army the enemy continued his drive towards the east in the direction of the Meuse and penetrated the Argonne near Grandpree and Clermont. The defense line of the 1st Army was thereby breached. Fighting is raging around Verdun.

The Americans have formed bridgeheads south of Verdun, including Commercy, and are apparently bringing up strong forces.

As a result of the powerful enemy advance the attack by the German forces assembled east of Vitry le Francois did not materialize. The divisions will now build up a defense front between Verdun and Commercy and eliminate the bridgeheads. A minor defense front was established on both sides of St. Mihiel.

Southern France:

Troop movements of the 64th Army Corps are being carried out in spite of hard fighting with terrorist groups. The various marching columns of the Corps are now near Nevers, Bourges and Poitiers. They will probably have crossed the Loire sector by 3 Sept. and the Bourgogne sector before 8 Sept.

Strong enemy forces compelled the 11th Armored Division to withdraw across the Isere towards the north. Only the self-sacrificing and heroic fighting of the 338th Infantry Division made it possible to transfer the bulk of the 85th Army Corps to the northern bank of the Isere.

The 4th Air Force Infantry Corps arrived in the Givors-Tournon area.

Armed Forces High Command, Intelligence Division, Foreign Armies West is reckoning with the possibility that the 3rd American Army is trying to penetrate into the area of the West Wall by way of Metz. Sufficient forces for such an operation are available.

Concentration of forces in the south and southeast of Britain continues. The stationing of four American divisions in the area of Bristol is particularly noteworthy and may point to impending transportation to the French front.

1 Sept. 1944

Indications for possible landings in the Norwegian or Danish sector are not apparent. Reports on possible invasions along the Belgian-Dutch coast or in the Heligoland Bight cannot be checked for lack of air reconnaissance.

Italian Front:

The enemy continued his massed attacks on the Adriatic coast with large forces. In spite of the most powerful support rendered by artillery, by successive waves of fighters and bombers, and by strong armored forces, a decisive break-through was likewise prevented on the foregoing day by our infantry fighting heroically in tropical heat. Daringly executed counterthrusts and counterattacks, splendidly supported by the combined fire of all weapons, intercepted the spearheads and sealed off penetrations. Fifty-one enemy tanks were destroyed. Especially severe was the struggle for Mont Calvo, which was lost. Fighting in the town of Pesaro lasted throughout the entire day.

Eastern Front:

Army Group Southern Ukraine:

The enemy took Bukarest and is now advancing towards the Bulgarian border.

Hard fighting is going on at the Transylvanian border passes.

Army Group Northern Ukraine and Center:

Disarming of the Slovakian Army started at noon. Bardiov and Poprad were taken by our forces.

Southeast of the Lysa Gora the enemy line was again pushed back in the course of hard fighting. Due to our attacks, the numerically far superior enemy is continually forced to shift his troops and is thereby compelled to postpone his major attack in the direction of Lodz-Cracow.

The enemy bridgehead near Annapol was eliminated; the greater part of a division was annihilated.

In Warsaw some additional strong points were taken.

1 Sept. 1944

Between Warsaw and the Narew, east of Ostrolenka, fierce local attacks were beaten off; new concentrations of enemy forces were spotted.

In the sector west of Mitau, tank-supported enemy attacks were repelled, penetrations were sealed off.

Northern Army Group:

North of the Dvina enemy attacks were broken up by our artillery fire.

The northern bank of the Emba, between Lake Virts and Lake Peipus was cleared of the enemy. It appears that enemy forces are again concentrating in the Valga sector for a push in the direction of the Gulf of Riga.

V. Chief of Operations Branch, Naval Staff:

a. The 9th Defense Division communicated to Admiral, Eastern Baltic of 31 Aug. information concerning Finnish armistice negotiations which are apparently taking place in Sweden. Naval Command, Baltic Sea transmitted these reports by telegram as per 1/Skl 2683/44 Gkdos. Chiefs, in War Diary, Part C, Volume III. Reliability of the sources cannot be judged.

b. According to another report by Naval Command, Baltic Sea, the 9th Defense Division has sent the following telegram to its formations in Finland:

"The German Legation reckons with the possibility that the Finns may try to cause political complications by provocation. In such a case we will have to act with extreme calmness and consideration. The honor of the German Flag and the prestige of the Reich must be maintained fully. Report at once all happenings to 9th Defense Division for transmission to Naval Staff. Supplement to Admiral, Eastern Baltic: Liaison Officer Tallgreen, attached to the 9th Defense Division, has been recalled. Group Buch is to send a liaison officer - regular army officer if possible and experienced - as replacement. In 1940 Tallgreen was liaison officer with the Russians at the time of occupation of Hangoe. It is assumed that Tallgreen is to disappear temporarily in order not to become too involved, in order that he may be used in subsequent peace negotiations with the Russians."

1 Sept. 1944

CONFIDENTIAL

Naval Staff, Operations Division forwarded the telegram to Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Foreign Intelligence Section, to Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters, to Naval Representative of Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, and to Naval Attache.

Chief, Naval Staff considers it appropriate to issue instructions that German soldiers in Finland may under no circumstances lay down their arms.

c. Complying with a request of Naval Command, Baltic Sea, the EMDEN and KOELN can be used for minelaying operations in the Skagerrak declared area. The Naval Command's plans for minelaying are still being examined.

d. The Commander in Chief, Navy has sent the following radiogram via Naval Shore Commander, Channel Islands to Battery Commander Cecembre, and for information of Admiral, Channel Coast and Group West:

"Together with the entire Navy I am proud of your gallant and exemplary fight. Your deeds will be recorded in the annals of the Navy and will always be remembered."

Special Items

I. Situation in the Balkans

Naval Commander, Group South reported to Commander in Chief, Navy during the night of 31 Aug.:

"1. Admiral Brinkmann will arrive in Sofia tonight and will then assume command of the troops in this area.

2. His task is being reduced to a minimum due to Bulgarian diplomacy. The Military Mission alone is competent in this matter. Direct contact with Bulgarians is out of the question. Therefore the Navy no longer has direct influence on Bulgarian authorities. Representation of German interests is being taken care of by the Naval Liaison Officer attached to the Military Mission.

CONFIDENTIAL

1 Sept. 1944

3. Command of combat groups is in the hands of the Military Mission. No local command tasks remain for the Navy.
4. As a result of the break-down in communications - with the exception of radio - caused by partisans or perhaps by Bulgarian official actions, I cannot carry out the operational task in this area under my command from here any longer.
5. However the numerous tasks arising in the Aegean, Adriatic and Danube areas can only be solved with a full staff. These tasks require our immediate and systematic attention. Communication with Naval Staff by teletype and telephone is essential, but is no longer possible from Sofia.
6. I therefore feel obliged to report that my presence is no longer required here; it is, however, essential at the Group Command which has already been withdrawn."

The report was at once relayed to the Fuehrer Headquarters by telegram to be submitted to Commander in Chief, Navy.

Group South reported at 1350 that Vice Admiral Brinkmann arrived in Sofia and that he has assumed command of the troops in this area.

Commander in Chief, Navy has reached the following decision:
"1. After turning over the naval command in the Bulgarian sector to Admiral Brinkmann, permission is given to transfer Command and Staff of Naval Group, South.

2. A report is to be submitted at once giving the reason why Battery "Tirpitz" was abandoned.

3. Expect personal report at "Koralle" as soon as possible. Armed Forces High Command, Operations Division informs Naval Staff of instructions sent to Air Force Command, Southeast, to support with all available forces the Air Force Command, Southeast, to support with all available forces the break-through of the vessels on the lower Danube through the Iron Gate in co-operation with Commander in Chief, Southeast and Naval Group South.

Naval Staff, Operations Division in turn informs Group South and Mineclearing Inspectorate Danube.

Further reports from Group South on the situation in Bulgaria at 1330 and 1700 deal with rumors of armistice terms for Bulgaria; confirmation is lacking.

1 Sept. 1944

Negotiations concerning the withdrawal of German troops - after internees and supplies have been removed - are being continued without much hope of a possible agreement. These negotiations will come to an end once the resignation of the Bagrianoff Cabinet becomes known. A Moravieff Cabinet with strong left leanings is expected. The Foreign Minister hinted that internment of the German forces would be attempted on 3 Aug. (apparently 3 Sept. is meant. Tr.N.)

II. With regard to plans of Group South for operations in the Aegean Sea (see War Diary 31 Aug.), Naval Staff operations Division calls the attention of the High Command, Air, Operations Division to the importance of sufficient air protection for planned sea-transport movements which will probably increase in the future. Copy of telegram as per l/Skl I L 2667/44 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C, Volume XIV.

With regard to the same operation, Naval Staff asks Armed Forces High Command, Operations Division, with copy to High Command, Air, Operations Division, to decide whether readiness must be maintained for operation "Gertrud" - codeword "Fliegenpilz". Preparations were made in agreement with the Air Force and reported on 3 Aug. Vessels are needed for dispersal movements.

III. Eastern Baltic

a. Naval Liaison Staff, Finland, Admiral, Eastern Baltic, with copy to Naval Command, Baltic Sea and 20th Mountain Army Command, have received the following instructions in connection with operation "Birke":

"A:1. In case the evacuation of Finland becomes necessary, tentative plans will be found under codeword "Birke". At present the preparations, following instructions from the Armed Forces High Command, deal with only broad outlines in regard to plan and time. The execution of the operation will be definitely the task of the Commanding General, North Finland (20th Mountain Army Command).

1 Sept. 1944

2. At a later date it is intended to inform the German General at the Finnish Forces High Command regarding southern Finland. Consent of the Armed Forces High Command is necessary. The General is not to be informed for the present because of his close connection with the Finnish Armed Forces.

3. At the proposal of the Naval Staff, the Armed Forces High Command, Operations Division (Navy) was ordered to inform Naval Attache, Helsinki and Naval Liaison Staff of operation "Birke", as per I a Nr. 773130/44 Gkdos. Chefs.

4. Admiral, Eastern Baltic is to carry out instruction under 3. and report execution.

5. 20th Mountain Army Command will organize naval liaison staff to prepare schedules for southern Finland and issue proper instructions. Absolute secrecy towards the Finns must be maintained.

B. 1. Transportation for the evacuation of about 4,000 German citizens and nationals can be supplied. Notification -at least five days prior to departure - is required. Vessels probably will be available for evacuation of several thousand Finns.

2. Further requests for shipping space, including the most exact information possible about personnel and material to be evacuated, should be sent to Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Shipping and Transport Branch, 20th Mountain Army Command, Naval Command, Baltic Sea and Admiral, Eastern Baltic.

b. According to Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Shipping and Transport Branch, the following Finnish ships are reported to be in the German sphere of influence on the morning of 1 Sept.:

North Sea	10
Baltic Sea	17
Norway	7

Fourteen German ships are anchored in Finnish ports; in all 21,000 BRT. Eleven ships of about 15,000 BRT are on the way to Finland.

CONFIDENTIAL

1 Sept. 1944

IV. Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff (Navy.) forwards copy of memorandum of conference held with Reichsfuehrer SS on 26 Aug. concerning construction in the Heligoland Bight.

Copy as per 1/Skl 2691/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Copy II a.

V. West Area.

a. On 30 Aug. the Fuehrer ordered that the West Wall defenses be made ready for action. Copy as per 1/Skl 2689/44 Gkdos. Chfs, in War Diary, File "Invasion, 1 Sept. 1944."

b. In compliance with orders of the Fuehrer issued on 20 and 30 Aug. concerning defense of the German western front and of the West Wall, Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff has given instructions for execution.

Copy as per 1/Skl 27071/44 Gkdos. in War Diary File "Invasion 1 Sept. 1944 "

Naval Staff, Operations Division refers Group West to Commander in Chief, West for information.

c. Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff has issued another order which reads as follows:

"Regret developments necessitate the transfer of the Headquarters of Commander in Chief, West to the Koblenz - Andernach - Mayen area. The Third Air Force and Naval Group West are likewise to be moved to this area. The installation Muenstereifel remains closed until further notice. The Commander in Chief, West will report the time of transfer of the Headquarters of Commanding General, West, Third Air Force and Naval Group West.

VI. The Commanding Admiral, Naval Command Baltic, Commanding Admiral, Eastern Baltic, Commander, 9th Defense Division, Commanding Admiral, Norway, Commanding Admiral, Arctic Coast, Commandant of Kirkenes, with copy to Fleet and Commanding Admiral, Submarines receive the following directions from Naval Staff:

CONFIDENTIAL

1 Sept. 1944

"Events in Rumania have shown that even small units in allied countries must have precise orders to resist internment by force of arms in case that country collapses. All necessary orders for units under your command are to be issued immediately.

VII. Summary of enemy news obtained from radio deciphering and radio monitoring between 14 and 20 Aug. are contained in Radio Intercept Report No. 35/44. Most of the information concerns the Channel area and deals with operations of British and German PT boats, the German use of small battle units and countermeasures taken against the latter. Essentially new knowledge has not been gained.

Situation 1 Sept. 1944.

I. Situation West Area.

1. Enemy Situation:

Fifty-six planes of the 19th Group were spotted; three British, one American and one Allied vessel were located in the rendezvous area.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

Patrol positions off Brest and Lorient were taken up. Two motor coasters and four armed fishing vessels sailed from Ouessant for Brest, one motor coaster and two armed fishing vessels from Lorient for Belle Ile and returned and two armed fishing vessels from Lorient for St. Nazaire. One outbound submarine was escorted from La Pallice. One mine was swept off La Pallice.

Destruction of the merchant shipping and naval harbors of Brest is continuing. Our batteries were attacked by fighter bombers. Enemy gun and mortar fire is now covering the entire fortified area. The floating torpedo barrage battery

CONFIDENTIAL

1 Sept. 1944

was pierced by bomb fragments and sank. The Plougastel peninsula has fallen into enemy hands after a massed attack by tanks and infantry, in which heavy weapons were used extensively. Enemy targets were under harassing fire. One enemy gun was destroyed, two more were damaged.

According to a report by Commanding Admiral, Atlantic Coast, bread rations for 33 days are available in Brest for 37,000 men; other supplies for 48 days, Provisions for 48 days are available in Lorient for 27,000 men; provisions for 43 days in St. Nazaire for 28,000 men; provisions for 80 days in La-Rochelle including Re and Oleron for 12,000 men; provisions for 70 days in Gironde South for 3,200 men. In St. Nazaire, Rochelle, and in the fortifications of the Gironde, it is still possible to secure food from the surrounding country side.

Channel Coast:

Group West and Commander in Chief, West have been in transit since 1500 of 1 Sept.; they are now in the area of Coblenz. Command Group Zabern is temporarily in control. Staff of Admiral, Channel Coast and Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West are retreating to the east.

Second Defense Division has taken over command in Bruges. The Location Center was likewise transferred to Gurgues.

Radar stations Valery en Caux, Point d'Ailly, Berck, Mardelot, Camiers and Olgasso were blown up.

The Harbor Commander of Le Treport and harbor guard Valery - in all two officers and 53 men - arrived at Boulogne. Guns and ammunition of Battery "Maliers d'Aval" were destroyed. Battery crews have brought along emergency anti-aircraft guns.

The blowing-up of the harbors Gravelines and Niepport was completed. Offices of the Harbor Commander have been disbanded. Personnel has been transferred to Dunkirk or Ostend.

Naval Supply depot Lombres was hit by a bomb in the morning of 1 Sept. and was completely destroyed.

CONFIDENTIAL

1 Sept. 1944

So far Le Havre has not been subjected to enemy activity either from land or from the sea. Demolition of the harbor is progressing. Owing to the weather and breakdown of tugs final closing of the harbor was delayed.

In response to British long-range gunfire, our long-range batteries on the Channel Coast shelled the British coast at 2345 on 1 Sept.

Besides reported shelling by battleships, Cecembre was under intense fire from land batteries all day on 31 Aug., which increased to a hail of fire in the evening. Three bomb aarpets were also dropped. Two subterranean shelters sustained cracks, two other shelters were destroyed. Firing control gear and the command post were destroyed, medical and supply stations were buried under rubble. The number of casualties has not yet been ascertained. Provisioning and removal is not possible at present due to weather conditions and sharp surveillance by enemy. Removal is planned to take place as soon as possible.

All "Biber" pilots belonging to Small Battle Units Flotilla 261 returned from operations on 31 Aug. Twelve boats (Biber) did not reach their target after cruising from six to nine hours in strong wind and high seas. Two boats were successful. One sank a Liberty ship and reached Le Havre, where it was blown up; the other one returned to Fecamp after sinking a large steamer. The whole Small Battle Units Flotilla 261 consisting of 14 "Biber" has been withdrawn to behind the Somme.

Small Battle Units Flotilla 212 is in the area south of Brussels at Action Station 1.

Small Battle Untis Flotillas 363 and 364 are being transferred to the south.

II. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

North Sea:

The motor ship TILLY sank in the North Holland Canal south of Helder with 14 mines aboard. Cause unknown. Convoying and minesweeping could not be carried out because of stormy weather.

1 Sept. 1944

Norway, Northern Waters:

1. Enemy Situation:

Twenty planes of the 18th Group were spotted in section over the northern North Sea.

Radio-telephone communication between an aircraft carrier and carrier based planes in the Arctic Ocean was intercepted between 0030 and 0040 during the night of 31 Aug. An American war vessel was inaccurately located in AF 4830 at 1055 on 1 Sept. The same day an Allied steamer was near AF 4220 at 1418, and an American vessel, probably a merchant ship, in the same area at 1445. A British ship was located inaccurately in AF 54.

A special ice-breaker of 400 BRT on a course of 60° was reported in AA 5340 at 2045 on 1 Sept. Two "Zaunkoenig" torpedoes fired by the escort submarine "703" missed the target. At 1011 the KEHDINGEN reported an attack by surface forces in AA 2643 and at 1106 the following message was received:

"Escape doubtful; destruction of secret papers and ship assured."

The vessel tried to reach South Koldewey.

2. Own Situation:

The Alta Fjord is again open to shipping; road barricades were removed on 1 Sept. Due to danger from carrier-borne planes, convoy traffic between Bodø and Hammerfest is still suspended.

Three mine chambers on the south quay of Utsire detonated at 1350 on 31 Aug.; explosion was presumably caused by lightning.

A convoy was attacked by an enemy submarine southwest of Obrestad at 1808 on 1 Sept. Four detonations were heard, two of them ashore. Torpedo tracks were observed.

Twelve vessels sailing in northern directions and 17 on southern course were escorted.

1 Sept. 1944

Naval Command Norway reported: "Enemy movements have been going on in Arctic waters since about 20 Aug. Only a very incomplete picture is gained from some radio reports by Group "Trutz" and from limited air reconnaissance."

In view of the development of the situation in northern Norway including Narvik and Alta Naval Command, Norway feels that concentration of all available forces in this area is desirable.

Further attacks on the TIRPITZ by carrier-borne planes must be expected. Submarine action would offset this danger and increase the defense. Substantial numbers of submarines ready for action are at present in far distant areas engaged in the special operations "Greif" and "Dachs". In the event of enemy action against the Norwegian sector, their participation cannot be effected in time.

Suggestions by Naval Staff, Submarine Division have been requested.

III. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

1. Enemy Situation:

One fleet command, five minesweeping formations and 60 war vessels and command posts were confirmed by radio monitoring in the Gulf of Finland on 31 Aug.

Two boats were in AO 3741 on the morning of 1 Sept.

2. Own Situation:

Admiral, Skagerrak:

Patrol of west coast of Jutland restricted due to weather conditions. For the same reason Coastal Mine "A" task-force could not go into action.

Twenty boats were engaged in minesweeping duties.

Western and Central Baltic Sea:

Fifty-two boats and one special mine-exploding vessel were used for minesweeping operations. Two mines were swept off Pillau, two in the Koenigsberg Sea Canal, one each in the Pomeranian Bight and Stettin Haff, two off Darsser Ort, and one in Kiel Bay.

CONFIDENTIAL

1 Sept. 1944

Submarine U "1000" was damaged by a mine off Pillau at 0800 on 31 Aug. and was towed in. No casualties.

Patrol vessel "245" sank on the same day after striking a mine in the Koenigsberg Sea Canal.

Admiral, Eastern Baltic Sea.

The 5th PT Boat Flotilla with five boats carried out the task of disposing of wreck U "250" during the night of 30 Aug. Four Finnish motor minesweepers and three Finnish patrol vessels took part. Several torpedo mines were secretly laid at the scene of the sinking. PT boat "80" struck a mine and sank.

At 2300 on 31 Aug., seven Finnish PT boats carried out a sweep into the Narba area, west of Kiuseri, at top speed. From there three boats went at low speed to Seiskari, the remaining four boats went into the Narvi area with excessive engine noise to divert attention.

While sweeping the area for the new mine barrage "Seeigel X b", the 1st Motor Minesweeper Flotilla cut two mines about 0,2 miles east of the planned barrage; these were recognized as EMC mines. This should prove beyond doubt that the 6th Torpedo-Boat Flotilla fell prey to our own mines.

Motor minesweeper "127" hit a snagline mine in AO 3744 top left. Boat continued under its own power.

Seventy-six coastal mines type "A" were planted in Kunda Bay.

IV. Submarine Warfare.

According to radio monitoring an unknown vessel was torpedoed at 0700 presumably in AM 6412.

U "703" in the Arctic Ocean lost contact with the weather ship KEHDINGEN after she sailed into the polar region.

Otherwise nothing to report.

CONFIDENTIAL

1 Sept. 1944

V. Aerial Warfare.

West Area:

About 160 enemy planes flew over Belgium and northern France, 60 of which carried out ground attacks in the Venlo, Bruges and Dordrecht areas. Slight fighter-bomber activity was reported from the southern France area. Activity by enemy planes on the night of 1 Sept. was not confirmed.

One hundred and twenty-one of our planes with rocket firing guns and cannon attacked concentrations of tanks and trucks in the area south of Verdun. Noticeable results were effected. No losses were suffered. Seventy-three of our planes were detailed to attack Verdun during the night of 1 Sept.

Reich Territory:

In the course of the day 300 Enemy fighter planes were reported in the area of the Rhine and Mosel, from Cleve to Wiesbaden, and from Trier to Luxemburg. 50 four-engined enemy planes were in the Luxemburg - Metz area without attacking. Thirty to 40 fighters entered Hungary from the south by way of Croatia and attacked the air base Debrecin, setting fire to about 30 planes flying at a low altitude bombed the railroad station Szolnok in the Hungarian area and demolished an air base.

Fifty Mosquitoes attacked Bremen in the night of 1 Sept. Three planes were reported in the area of Stettin - Ruegen Stralsund. Eight planes flying singly penetrated the area of Heligoland Bight - Ostfriesland - Hanover - Brunswick - Halberstadt and Rathenow without attacking. Ten planes, likewise flying singly, bombed towns and transport targets, in the Rhineland, Alsace - Lorraine and in the area of Augsburg.

Mediterranean Theater:

On 31 Aug. 450 enemy planes were reported over northern Italy, attacking transport objectives behind the front. Two hundred and fifty enemy planes from southern Italy entered the Rumanian area by way of northwest Bulgaria. So far no official news about attacks there has been received. One hundred and eighty two-engined planes were on bombing missions in the Padua - Treviso - Mestre area, and about 140 four-

1 Sept. 1944

engined planes with fighter protection destroyed transport facilities in the Padua - Mestre - Treviso area. Traffic from Padua in all directions has been suspended.

Ten Ju 87's patrolled the Danube between Calafat and Turnu Severin to protect movements of our own vessels. North of Calafat, one Rumania vessel was attacked and damaged.

During the night of 31 Aug. 100 enemy planes attacked industrial targets in the Ferrara area. Otherwise enemy air activity was of the usual kind.

In the area of the southern French coast and Corsica 16 vessels and one destroyer were located by radar during the night of 1 Sept.

Eastern Front:

Forty-nine own and 1624 enemy flights, besides 220 American flights were reported on the eastern front on 31 Aug. Nine of our planes were lost; 656 enemy planes were shot down.

Extensive traffic of courier planes was observed between Sweden and England. In all, nine planes were confirmed.

VI. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

1., Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

One COVENTRY-class cruiser, 8 destroyers, 16 corvettes 3 submarines, 10 "Agathe" boats, 26 freighters, 12 torpedo boats, 1 transport, and 14 tugs were in Gibraltar at noon on 31 Aug.

Two destroyers shelled the southern French coast at Cape Martin in the afternoon.

In the night of 31 Aug. Monte Agel was also shelled by two destroyers.

IN addition to a small convoy reported by air reconnaissance in the night of 31 Aug. between the southern French coast and Corsica, one group of vessels was located by radar six

1 Sept. 1944

miles southwest of Genoa lurking inside the barrage, and one 16 miles west of Tino on southerly course.

Intensified night fighter-bomber activity was observed in northern Ligurian waters. A convoy consisting of naval landing craft and open sailing vessels en route from Savona to Genoa was attacked without result at 0130. One plane was shot down.

Own Situation:

The present headquarters of Admiral, French Southern Coast are at Chalons sur Saone, as reported at 0700 on 1 Sept. In case of necessity Besancon should be chosen as permanent location.

Command, Small Battle Units reported that, due to the necessary overhauling of engines, no further action is planned at present against the landing area of the southern French coast.

Two platoons of Naval Replacement Company 80 were put into action to relieve a unit encircled in Domo d'Ossola. While on the march, two heavy surprise attacks were made against them by partisans. The latter were repelled in violent house-to-house fighting lasting for two hours. They suffered severe casualties, 39 men were captured. Our own casualties were: three killed and nine wounded.

Motor Minesweeper "200" suffered three hits by rockets from an enemy plane while on coastal patrol inside and outside of our mine barrage which extends as far as off Nice; she was beached near St. Stefano. A reconnaissance sweep by four torpedo boats planned for the night of 31 Aug. did not take place due to engine trouble. The boats were transferred to Genoa.

Convoy and patrol duty in the night of 31 Aug. were carried out as planned.

According to German Naval Command, Italy 51 enemy planes were shot down by vessels of the Navy and by the use of special weapons between 1 and 31 Aug. One torpedo boat, one destroyer, one large and two small vessels were damaged. Sea-transport in the area of the Italian west coast amounted to 23,000 tons according to preliminary reports.

1 Sept. 1944

2. Area Naval Group South:

Adriatic Sea:

In the night of 31 Aug. single enemy planes dropped bombs on Lussin, causing damage to material and buildings. Cattolica was shelled from the land and attacked by fighter-bombers.

Destruction and mining of the harbor has been ordered. One motor coaster lying in Po de Core was damaged by gunfire from the air.

According to preliminary reports, 12,000 tons were transported by sea along the Italian coast in the month of August. The trans-shipment of goods from and to the east coast of the Adriatic Sea amounted to 9,300 tons.

Aegean Sea:

In the afternoon and evening of 31 Aug. one submarine was sighted north of Iraklion and one at the northern point of Paros. Apart from the usual reconnaissance, enemy activity involving fighter-bombers was intensified against our increased air transports and convoys. In the morning the convoy torpedo boat TA "18" and war transport ERPEL en route from Piraeus to Sunda were bombed southwest of Milos without result.

Black Sea:

A report on the situation in Bulgaria and Rumania has previously been made.

Situation on the Danube:

The Zieb force put into Prahovo. Minesweeper Group Lower Danube also arrived in Prahovo.

So far the Rumanian monitors have not been contacted again. Four successful sweeping operations on the Danube were reported on 30 Aug. No mines were dropped according to reports on 30 Aug. No mines were dropped according to reports on 31 Aug. One motor vessel and two tugs sank at km indicator 1448.

In the night of 31 Aug. the Danube flotilla brought down one enemy bomber at km indicator 1080. In the morning of 1 Sept. one group of the flotilla, detached to Bazias to take on

1 Sept. 1944

water, was heavily fired upon by mortars and machine guns so that the task could not be accomplished. An enemy fighter group was forced to turn off; one fighter was shot down.

According to a radiogram sent by the Zieb force, passage was forced at Calafat in the course of an artillery duel between 2052 and 2130 on 31 Aug. Three gun-carriers belonging to the Minesweeper Group Lower Danube joined the force.

VII Situation Far East.

According to information of the Reich Security Central Office received from London at the beginning of August a large-scale Burma offensive will be started by the British in the second half of November. It is hinted in Attache circles in Stockholm that an attack against the Nikobar and Andaman island groups is expected at the beginning of October.

2 Sept. 1944

Items of Political Importance

Nothing to report.

Conference on the Situation with the Chief, Naval Staff at 1115

I. Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division: The Army and Air Force will each receive 2/5 and the Navy 1/5 of the production of light anti-aircraft ammunition according to a distribution formula recently established. Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division considers the quota to be acceptable in spite of increased consumption.

The plane which was to transport ammunition to La Pallice crashed at the Kyffhaeuser. A new attempt will be made.

Chief, Naval Staff confirms that, according to a directive relayed by the Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters, delivery of PT boats to the Finnish Navy is to be stopped at once. So far only one boat flying the Finnish flag was ready for departure at Swinemuende. Departure will be prevented by all means at the disposal of Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Fleet Branch.

II. Chief, Bureau of Naval Armament gives information about Navy supplies in the western area. More than 9,000 torpedo heads are stored in the Maginot fortifications. Naval Construction Division possesses a large store of supplies west of the Maginot line near Pcitiers. Additional stores are located in the West Wall and in Holland. While ammunition has been stored in the Western Area for local consumption only, more than 8,000 freight cars of clothing were removed to this area.

During the afternoon the Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters communicated the order of Commander in Chief, Navy to begin evacuation of naval supplies west of the West Wall including Netherlands, unless they are essential for our combat troops.

Naval Staff transmitted proper directives to Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Plans and Schedules Branch; Chief Bureau of Naval Armament; and Chief, Bureau of Naval Administration.

2 Sept. 1944

Concerning the moving of vessels under construction in Dutch shipyards, Chief, Bureau of Naval Armament reports that completion in German shipyards would not be possible due to scarcity of space and laborers.

Chief, Bureau of Naval Armament proposed the issuing of an order that work on all vessels nearing completion should be accelerated. Local authorities will have to establish to what extent this task can be accomplished. Question is being investigated by Bureau of Naval Armament. The Commander in Chief, Navy will receive a direct report from Bureau of Naval Armament.

III. Chief, Naval Intelligence Division.

In Serbia, agreement between Nedich and Mihailovich on an anti-bolshevist basis seems to be in the making. The Serbs have proposed to disarm Bulgarians on Serbian territory as well as German troops.

The British claim surrender of Cecembre.

In a restricted Circle.

IV. Army Situation:

Western Front:

The enemy extended his penetrations on both sides of Amiens to the north and on both flanks. Arras was taken by strong tank forces. Tank spearheads are feeling their way in the direction of Houdain-Lens.

The enemy captured Bapaume and Perrone at dusk. Strong tank forces are entering the area of the break-through. Due to the scarcity of armor piercing weapons, units of the 15th and 5th Armored Army - now on both sides of the Somme - are in no condition to cope with the onslaught of superior enemy forces. The situation is at present not clear.

2 Sept. 1944

Along the line Canche (sector up to Hesdine) - St. Pol - Houdain - Lens - Douay - Cambrai, a defense front is being built up with troops quickly brought up. The west flank of the 5th Armored Army will be withdrawn to behind the Somme on the night of 2 Sept.

The enemy pushed back our weak defense forces between Oise and Charleville and tank spearheads reached the line Vevinne - Aubenton.

A break-through on both sides of Signy - l'Abbaye was prevented in hard fighting by the 2nd Armored Division.

South of Vouziers, in the area held by the 1st Army, American tank forces broke through to the east. Grandpre and Verdun were taken. An enemy tank thrust reached Longwy and the area between Longwy and Arlon. Parts of the 15th Armored Infantry Division and the Armored Training Division compelled the enemy to withdraw from Varenne and Clermont, but are now involved in stiff defense fighting against superior forces. Other units are in the action to eliminate the bridgeheads at Lerouville and Commercy. No reports have been received about the enemy's advance in the direction of Toul. A defensive front Diedenhofen - Metz - Nancy is being formed.

British forces will continue their attempts to reach the V 1 bases while American forces will continue their push to the east, towards the West Wall.

Italian Front:

Not until the early morning hours did the enemy follow up our earlier withdrawal movements near Florence by crossing the Arno.

Likewise on 1 Sept. the enemy continued his massed attacks against the Adriatic front with increased violence. In spite of further tank reinforcements, increased activity of artillery and air forces, all enemy attempts to break through were frustrated by the steadfastness of our troops, who, by fighting tenaciously and recklessly and counter-attacking continuously, caused the enemy severe casualties. Our own casualties were also considerable. Altogether 56 enemy tanks were put out of action or destroyed in close-range fighting.

In the area of the 26th Armored Division the enemy was able to encircle an elevated point by outflanking movements from both sides. The annihilation of the garrison which fought heroically for several hours must be assumed. Further strong attacks against the center and left flank of the division

2 Sept. 1944

failed due to the stubborn resistance of the Armored Infantry fighting to the bitter end.

Whether our numerically weak forces will be able to stand this battle of attrition for any length of time, will be seen in the near future. The enemy has at his disposal a sufficiently large number of new divisions to keep up this fight for a fairly long time.

Eastern Front:

Army Group Southern Ukraine:

The annihilation of the German forces in the area east of Buzau must be expected.

Severe fighting is going on near the Oitoz-Pass and Byimesbuekk-Pass on the border of Transylvania.

All is quiet on the northern Carpathian front.

The Russians apparently have reached the Bulgarian border from Rumania. Five to six motorized corps and one tank army are apparently in the area surrounding Bucharest. With these forces the Russians are able to a push from western Rumania into the Hungarian plains. This push could be synchronized with an attack from the north over the Beskides.

The strength of the enemy forces to be used against Bulgaria is not yet evident.

The attitude of the Russians towards the Rumanians is still inconsistent. The hithertorexisting Rumanian front formations are evidently treated as enemies and disarmed. A noticeable change in the general situation, however, must not be expected.

Army Group Northern Ukraine:

Our attack southeast of the Lysa Gora encountered strong enemy resistance and forceful counterthrusts.

Central and Northern Army Groups:

Additional strong points were taken in Warsaw. The Soviets continued their forceful attacks northeast of Warsaw supported by tank formations and planes. They achieved penetrations up

2 Sept. 1944

to a depth of 5 km. About 55 enemy tanks were destroyed.

In Kurland the enemy attacked on a broad front near Schaken and was, for the most part, repulsed.

Otherwise only minor local fighting took place in the area of Northern Army Group.

Special Items

I. Concerning Finland.

At 1401 High Command, Navy, Bureau of Naval Armament informs Naval Staff, Operations Division, with copy to proper offices, that Armed Forces High Command has ordered that all deliveries to Finland are to be delayed. Feasible excuses should be given.

At 1445 Reich Security Central Office submits reports from a reliable agent dated 1 Sept. stating that in several ports the Finns are trying to delay departure of their ships for Germany. Session of Finnish Parliament did not take place on 1 Sept.

At 1615 Naval Command, Baltic Sea communicates a British noon-day broadcast, according to which Finnish ships are instructed by their government to sail for Finnish or Swedish ports.

At 1738 Naval Attache sends the following report to Naval Attache Helsinki:

"1. With reference to the Foreign Minister's announcement to the German Ambassador yesterday, the Finnish Naval Commander, in an exceptionally sharp and pointed language, commented as follows:

1. German assistance has been insufficient for a long time. In naval matters this has become evident by the delay in torpedo and standard mine deliveries. He does not doubt the good intentions of the official agencies; nevertheless, obscure forces seemed to have exercised a restraining influence. In any case, Germany evidently did not wish to make the Finnish front as strong as the other sectors of the eastern front.

2 Sept. 1944

2. Anxiety is felt here that Germany may enter upon negotiations with Russia whenever her interests demand such a step. Germany may again sacrifice Finland as she did during the Winter Campaign of 1940 in spite of Finland's great suffering endured over a long period of time in Germany's interests. As to the latter point, I shall once more see the Finnish Naval Commander and quote the Fuehrer's letter to Ryti.

A conference lasting for almost an hour took place which was in parts attended by the Operations Officer to the Commanding Admiral, Eastern Baltic. The impression was gained here as well as in other circles that Valve argued in such a way as to blame Germany for present and future developments. The Ambassador is informed."

At 1820 Armed Forces High Command, War Economy Division gives information about cargoes and the time of departure of Finnish steamers GOTTFRIED, OTTO H., and NAJADEN. Orders were issued to wait for further instructions regarding the seizure of these vessels in case of intensification of the political situation.

Naval Staff, Operations Division is to instruct Naval Command, Baltic Sea accordingly.

A telegram was dispatched on 3 Sept. at 0453.

At 1915 Naval Command, Baltic Sea reports that according to Admiral, Eastern Baltic content of directive for Finnish ships (see "at 1615") was confirmed in Helsinki.

At 2030 Naval Attache submits Most Immediate Blitz Telegram sent by Naval Attache Helsinki at 1845, saying that the break in relations is expected tonight.

Naval Command, Baltic Sea, Admiral, Eastern Baltic were informed accordingly by Naval Attache Helsinki. Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters, Armed Forces High Command and Intelligence Division were likewise notified by the Naval Attache.

At 2040 the Foreign Office communicates:

"Legation Helsinki wired on 1 Sept. as follows:

1. "Finnish ships received orders not to sail for Germany because of acute danger of mines.
At present 30 German ships are in Finland."

2 Sept. 1944

2. It is learned from a reliable source that Finland has for several days hastened the departure of Finnish vessels from German ports without waiting for full cargoes."

At 2200 Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters communicates by telephone to Chief, Operations Division, Naval Staff the following order of the Commander in Chief, Navy:

- "1. All Finnish ships in the German sphere of influence are to be detained on suitable pretense:
2. All German ships en route to Finland must turn back or sail for Baltic ports."

The directive is immediately telephoned to Naval Command, Baltic Sea, Operations Section, and Naval Staff, Operations Division, Shipping and Transport Branch.

At 2235 Naval Representative at Armed Forces High Command, Operations Division reports by telephone upon inquiry that instructions for operations "Birke" are on the way. Upon receipt preparations for operation "Birke" can be started. At the same time it is pointed out to him that the 20th Mountain Army Command must be informed and that the latter command in turn must notify the German General at the Finnish Headquarters, since there is no evidence that Naval Liaison Staff Finland has been informed by Admiral, Eastern Baltic.

At 2240 Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Shipping and Transport Branch is instructed by telephone by Naval Staff, Operations Division:

"Provide tonnage for operation "birke"

At 2250 Naval Staff, Chief, Operations Division transmits by telephone to Naval Command, Baltic Sea, Operations Section the following:

- "1. Be prepared for operation "Birke";
2. Combat group and other naval forces must be ready for action
3. Attention is called to organizing prize crews for operation "Birke";
4. Order for departure of German ships from Finnish ports cannot yet be given as tonnage will be used for operation "Birke". 9th Defense Division must be instructed to give priority to the defense of German shipping."

2 Sept. 1944

At 2315 Admiral, Eastern Baltic reports that Naval Liaison Staff Finland has received instructions for operation "Birke" by Chief of Staff.

The following directives were issued by Naval Staff in the course of the evening:

- a. To Naval Commands, Baltic Sea, Admiral, Eastern Baltic 9th Defense Division, 20th Mountain Army Command, Naval Liaison Staff Finland, with copy to Commanding Admiral, Norway, High Command, Air, Operations Division, Army High Command, Army, General Staff, and Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters:
 - 1. There is danger of a break in diplomatic relations with Finland.
 - 2. Precautions must be taken to make seizure of German ships impossible. German war and merchant ships must therefore leave Finnish ports. Exceptions are the harbors of Kemi and Oulu where safety to German ships is guaranteed. Make for Baltic or German ports. Wait for further instructions.
 - 3. Be prepared for operation "Birke".
 - 4. Stop Finnish ships on suitable pretext, even at sea.
 - 5. Decision about operation "Tanne" will follow."
- b. To Naval Command, Baltic Sea; North; Norway; Commanding Admiral, Defense, North; Commanding Admiral, Defenses, Baltic Sea; Admiral, Skagerrak; Admiral, Eastern Baltic; and Naval Staff; Shipping and Transport Branch:

"Hold all Finnish ships in the German sphere of influence on suitable pretext."

At 2345 Chief, Naval Staff issues, after consultation by telephone with Commander in Chief, Navy the following order:

- 1. All German war and merchant ships must leave ports where danger of possible seizure by Finns exists at once and sail, if at all possible, for German or Baltic harbors. Await further orders.
- 2. Take precautionary measures that no seizure of German ships occur.

2 Sept. 1944

3. All warships in the area of the Eastern Baltic Sea must be kept at a high degree of readiness.

At 2400 Naval Staff, Shipping and Transport Branch reports that Commander in Chief, Navy has agreed in a telephone conversation that German ships in Oulu and Kemi remain there, as both ports are to all intents and purposes in German hands. These ships will be used for operation "Birke".

In the meantime the Foreign Office has learned that the Russian ultimatum will contain, among other demands the stipulation that Finland must be cleared of all Germans by 15 Sept.

II. Eastern Baltic Sea.

On 1 Sept. Naval Liaison Officer at the Army General Staff communicated the following:

"1. Chief, Army General Staff today stressed the intention of the Army to hold the Baltic Islands even in the event of the possible loss of Reval. Confirmation is requested that report of 10 Aug. (1/Skl I Nord 2396/44 Gkdos. - Chefs.) is still the opinion of Naval Staff.

2. Reference is made to the necessary defense and reinforcement of Libau and Windau. Instruction by Naval Staff about intentions and measures to be adopted is requested.

3. Possibility of defense of Kurland was judged with confidence. This would prevent enemy air bases from being established close to Reich territory."

Naval Staff, Operations Division sent the requested confirmation to Naval Liaison Officer, Army General Staff with copy to Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters which reads as follows:

"As to 1: Contents of 1/Skl I Nord 2396/44 Gkdos. Chefs. of 10 Aug. is still the opinion of Naval Staff.

As to 2: It is not intended to reinforce the coastal defenses of Libau and Windau by naval land forces since after the transfer of suitable units to Army Group North, further forces are not available. Defense of bases is the concern of the Army.

2 Sept. 1944

Supplement: The importance of holding the bridgehead in northern Kurland with Windau for the supplying of Riga by way of the Irben Strait is again emphasized. Otherwise it is to be expected that entrance into the Gulf of Riga will be prevented by enemy coastal guns, by air attacks, as well as by enemy landings (airborne landings) on the south coast of Oesel."

III. Coastal Defense, Baltic Sea.

Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division ordered on 28 Aug. that thirty-two 15 cm and twelve 10,5 cm guns of future deliveries will be made available for October 1944 to March 1945 to reinforce coastal defenses in the entire area of Naval Command, Baltic Sea. Additional allocation of naval gunnery personnel cannot be counted upon.

IV. West Area.

a. Commander in Chief, Navy, on the occasion of the fourth anniversary of the Lorient shipyards heartily congratulated Rear Admiral Matthias and dockyard workers and expressed appreciation of the fine work achieved. The radiogram message reads as follows:

"Your name will forever be linked with the history of the submarine. I am sure that all of you will fight to the last to defend your work. The longer the enemy is denied entrance to the fort and the harbor the greater is the assistance rendered to the fighting Army of the West and to your homeland. Long live the Fuehrer!"

b. Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West reported the following formations to be ready for further assignment

1. 36th Minesweeper Flotilla with three groups of drifters and one group of armed fishing vessels.
2. 2nd Gun-Carrier Flotilla with 14 gun-carriers.
3. 13th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla with 12 vessels.

The Commanding Admiral, Defenses West proposed to leave the 8th and 2nd Gun-Carrier Flotillas for the present in the area Flushing - Antwerp - Rotterdam for the ferrying of troops after operation "Rouen".

2 Sept. 1944

Naval Staff orders that the 2nd Gun-Carrier Flotilla is to be used for this purpose. The 8th Gun-Carrier Flotilla is to continue its easterly course, to be placed under the command of Naval Command Norway. The 36th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla will be assigned to Naval Command Baltic Sea, and the 14th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla and 2nd Gun-Carrier Flotilla to Naval Command North.

V. Balkans

Navy Group Command South took over command in Vienna at 0400. From a monitored radiogram at 2040 from Admiral, Black Sea to Group South, the following was learned: Captain Remmler arrived at Sofia with 9 officers, 5 officials, 11 warrant officers, 16 mates and 60 men. All naval personnel capable of bearing arms - 30 officers, 6 officials, 64 mates and 373 men. - were assembled in Naval Communications Officers and "Bonte" Barracks with the exception of Alarm Group South, which has occupied Camp Seminaria. Lieutenant Commander Klassmann and 750 men left Sofia unarmed at noon proceeding by express transport. Captain Grattenauer supervised transfer of Army troops in the strength of a battalion from Vidin to Sofia.

According to a Reich Security Central Office report from Hungary, about 1000 men of a German naval transport from Varna are supposed to have been disarmed and interned at Ichtimann on 30 Aug. The Bulgarian Ministry of War expects a declaration of war on Germany within the next two or three days.

Admiral, Adriatic Sea, with copy to Group South, receives the following directive from the Naval Staff:

"Events in Rumania have shown that in Allied countries every single unit must have precise orders to resist internment by armed force. All the necessary orders to units under your command are to be issued immediately." (Compare War Diary 1 Sept. Special Items, VI.)

VI. Adriatic Sea:

Group South and Admiral, Adriatic Sea, with copy to German Naval Command, Italy and 1st PT Boat Flotilla, receive the following directive for PT boat operations in the Adriatic Sea:

2 Sept. 1944

"1. The illumination of Ancona by night and the fact that vessels accompanied by very small escort forces have been sighted by the Air Force in the area of Bari, prove that the enemy feels quite safe due to our inactivity off the Italian coast over a period of several months.

2. The assumption is justified that his air escort is likewise in action on the east coast of the Adriatic; therefore, less patrolling is done in the central Adriatic Sea and off the Italian coast.

3. Withdrawal of enemy destroyers from the Dalmatian coast might be expected from a single appearance of our forces off the Italian coast. It is certain that our convoys will then have greater freedom of movement.

4. Therefore, with the nights becoming longer, PT boat sweeps against the Italian east coast are a possibility. Report intentions.

5. In the meantime, High Command, Navy has ordered the release of "T V" torpedoes to be used against destroyers by the 3rd and 7th PT Boat Flotillas at Pola".

VII. Norway

With regard to naval warfare in Norway, Chief, Naval Staff orders the following:

- "A. 1. The invasion of northern France, accomplished by the Western Powers, has led to the loss of the strong points in western France and of the submarine bases on the Atlantic.
2. The Commander in Chief, Navy has repeatedly emphasized that, in spite of the changed situation, the resumption of submarine warfare is the chief concern of the Navy.
3. Under the circumstances Norway is gaining more and more importance as base for submarine warfare in the Atlantic, the main area of operation for our submarines.

B. From A. the following tasks result:

1. Concentration of all naval construction facilities for the purpose of building up a new submarine force as well as other vessels necessary for defending

CONFIDENTIAL

2 Sept. 1944

and keeping open the sea approaches.

2. Establishment of an organization adapted to changed conditions.
3. Continuation of construction of all projects started and re-examination of the bases in Norway needed for naval warfare, primarily with regard to armament and supply. (Supply of ammunition, fuel, provisions, consumable goods, etc.).
4. Change of the basic naval warfare organizations at home, particularly with regard to supply and replacement for Norway to bring them in line with the demands resulting from 1., 2., and 3.

C. The demands to be made by Naval Staff, Submarine Division will have to serve as the guide for the development of Norway as a base. Naval Staff, Submarine Division will communicate these demands to all offices concerned as soon as possible. For the execution of these demands greatest speed is essential, for it must be assumed that the enemy will concentrate his forces, now released in the Atlantic and the Mediterranean, in the northern area for offensive operations against Norway before bad weather sets in.

Copy as per Chef 1/Skl 26 988/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Volume II a.

Situation 2 Sept. 1944

I. Situation West Area.

1. Enemy Situation:

Seventeen planes of the 19th Group were detected. The battleship WARSPITE shelled the coastal batteries of Brest.

At 2000 on 1 Sept. several concentrations of ships - among them one large vessel - were observed southwest of Cape de la Haye.

2. Own Situation:

CONFIDENTIAL

2 Sept, 1944

Atlantic Coast:

Ouessant was evacuated during the night of 1 Sept. Fixed weapons and instruments were blown up. The garrison was transferred to Brest and put into action. One boat with 20 men is overdue.

The enemy mass attack, launched along the entire fortified front of Brest with far superior forces, was substantially smashed in spite of the fact that the assault received the strongest artillery, tank and Air Force support. This must be credited to the exemplary heroism of the defenders and to the excellent co-operation they received from the fortress artillery. Gaps were either closed by withdrawing the foreground defense line, or cleared by fierce counterthrusts. Heavy losses were inflicted. The foreground defense line with the peninsula Crozon had to be surrendered because of the treacherousness of two Russian battalions put into action, and because of strong enemy pressure.

In the course of the desperate defense against air and ground attacks over a period of three weeks, all units have distinguished themselves. Special mention, however, should be made of the 3rd Naval Anti-Aircraft Brigade under the command of Captain Richter, put into action in the front lines. Casualties since the beginning of hostilities are: 619 killed, 1965 wounded and 2799 missing. Of the 183 guns which could be used against land targets, 63 are completely put out of action, 12 are in repair.

A new demand for surrender of Lorient was rejected; the arsenal there was under harassing fire.

St. Nazaire: According to statements by French fishermen, boat crews were landed by the enemy on Ile d'Yeu and Les Sables.

So far not a single air-transport with urgently needed arms, ammunition, and equipment has arrived at Gironde.

Channel Area:

Hits were scored against a British battery and fire was observed in Dover as the result of long distance shelling of the English south coast in the evening of 1 Sept. No important damage was suffered.

2 Sept. 1944

On 2 Sept. 1944 at 0832 batteries 5 and 7/1245 stationed north of the mouth of the Somme, reported firing on armored reconnaissance cars south of St. Valery.

Group West issued the following orders to all shore batteries in the entire Channel Area:

"1. Naval and Army coastal batteries, as far as they are mobile, must be transferred at once to Boulogne or Dunkirk to strengthen the landfront defenses of these fortifications. Individual orders will be given by the naval shore commander in agreement with the Army.

2. Wherever possible, the position of the mounted 10.5 cm guns is to be shifted within the fortifications to permit use in the landfront defense.

3. Heavy Batteries "Todt", "Friedrich August", "Grosser Kurfuerst" and "Lindemann" have to be kept ready for action as long as possible and are to be defended to the very last.

4. Batteries not mentioned in 1. to 3. have to remain in readiness until order for blowing up is given by the naval shore commander in agreement with the Army. After the batteries have been destroyed, the crews will retreat to the fortifications as ordered, taking along small arms, ammunition, and supply. Instructions for the march or break-through must be provided in time.

5. Ammunition still stored outside of the fortifications or at a distance from the batteries named under 3. is to be moved at once into the fortifications and near the batteries, as far as the situation and transportation permit.

6. Artillery Arsenal Boulogne and Ordnance Command Bruges will immediately take the necessary steps in matters of personnel and materiel in order to secure restoration of shore batteries in fortifications and of the batteries named under 3."

Installations, beacons, and vessels in the harbor of Treport have been destroyed. Demolition of the harbors of Boulogne and Calais has been started.

On the night of 1 Sept., ten boats of the 14th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla, the submarine chaser "1431" and one tug left Boulogne for Dunkirk. After their departure fighter-bombers attacked in waves. Two minesweepers were heavily damaged by bombs and were taken in tow. Two planes were

2 Sept. 1944

brought down. After passing Cape Gris Nez the force was shelled by long-range guns. The submarine chaser counted about 60 salvos. The unsuccessful fire was returned by our long-range batteries. Later the force was attacked by three enemy PT boats, whose torpedoes detonated ashore. The enemy withdrew when fired upon under cover of smoke screens. Renewed attacks by fighter-bombers were repulsed. In addition to the two motor minesweepers already mentioned, three others were slightly damaged. The superstructure and hull of the submarine chaser was slightly damaged by long-range artillery fire. We suffered some casualties.

On the same night the Commander of the 8th Gun-Carrier Flotilla with six naval landing craft, one auxiliary minesweeper, two patrol boats, and one tug sailed from Boulogne to Dunkirk. The force repulsed several attacks by fighter-bombers and succeeded in bringing down one plane. Enemy long-range shelling and an attack by five PT boats directed against the force was unsuccessful. Our vessel arrived at Dunkirk without damage and with only three wounded.

The 2nd Gun-Carrier Flotilla with six naval landing craft on transfer from Boulogne to Dunkirk was attacked 22 times by fighter-bombers and was covered by 25 salvos fired by long-range artillery. A combined attack of fighter-bombers and PT boats lasted from 0125 to 0133. The naval landing craft AF "70" sank after being hit by a torpedo. Survivors were brought to Calais by AF "60". One enemy PT boat was probably sunk and one fighter-bomber presumably shot down.

The submarine chaser "1430" and patrol boat "716" traveling from Dunkirk to Ostend were twice unsuccessfully attacked by fighter-bombers.

One group of the 36th Minesweeper Flotilla reported contact with enemy PT boats which, when fired upon, turned off, laying smoke screens. Nine attacks by fighter-bombers followed, which, however, were spotted in time and repulsed.

The following reports came in describing the final fight of the Battery Cecembre:

Casualties on 31 Aug. were: nine killed, nine severely wounded, and 22 slightly wounded. The morale of the garrison was affected by heavy material damage, injuries, and burns. A large number of the men were exposed to new attacks from the sea and air without any protection; all shelters being destroyed.

2 Sept. 1944

At 1230 on 1 Sept. the hospital ship BORDEAUX left St. Helier for Cecembre and was stopped by an enemy destroyer. An attempt to take aboard the entire garrison failed due to enemy intervention and bad weather which suddenly set in. Two destroyers, one corvette, and at least four PT boats were observed in the area of Cecembre.

Ninety men of the garrison of 320 men were wounded. Only small arms were available. An attempt at removing the garrison had to be given up as hopeless, since the wind blew at force nine. At 0800 on 2 Sept. the Italians raised the white flag after failure of the attempt had become known. The battery commander reported to Naval Shore Commander Channel Coast, at 0950: "After hard fighting, after complete destruction of the last remaining arms and shelters by the enemy, and after complete exhaustion of the soldiers, I now surrender." Cecembre has not reported since. The Battery Commander, 1st Lieutenant Naval Gunnery Reserve, Siuss, was decorated by the Fuehrer with the oak leaf cluster to the Knight's Cross.

Group West, Operations Division has resumed command at Bad Schwalbach on 2 Sept. at 2400. Quartermaster Division will transfer temporarily to Wiesbaden on 3 Sept. A skeleton command serving as a communication link will remain in Zabern for the time being. Operational Staff Beehme was transferred from Tournay to Muenchen-Gladbach. Communication with this staff has been interrupted since 1500.

At 1500 Admiral, Southern French Coast moved farther north from Chalons sur Saone.

II. North Sea, Northern Waters, Norway.

North Sea:

In the night of 1 Sept. several fighter-bomber attacks were launched against patrol vessels off Walcheren. The coastal minelaying operation off Vlieland is being continued.

The following ships were convoyed in the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, North between 1 Aug. and 31 Aug.:

Two convoys of 60 ships with 1,538 BRT eastbound; 31 ships with 69,659 BRT Elbe-Ems bound; 37 ships with 83,460 BRT Ems-Elbe bound; 15 ships with 15,325 BRT Elbe-Esbjerg bound.

2 Sept. 1944

The 15th Patrol Flotilla and 36th and 48th Minesweeper Flotillas were transferred from Zeebrugge to Flushing.

Northern Waters, Norway:

1. Enemy Situation:

Twenty-one planes of the 18th Group were detected in operations. According to radio monitoring British blockade runners (PT boats) were at sea in the area of Humber - Sweden in the evening of 1 Sept. Destination unknown.

At 0445 on 1 Sept. an enemy submarine was observed in AB 5940.

At 0725 air reconnaissance reported three destroyers on westerly course in AE 9830.

2. Own Situation:

At 1400 on 1 Sept. a small Norwegian cutter sank after an explosion in the Lepsoey-Channel. The channel was again closed because of mines.

Twenty-three ships were escorted northbound and 25 ships southbound.

III. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

L. Enemy Situation:

On 1 Sept. radio monitoring confirmed eight minesweeper divisions and 43 war vessels or command posts engaged in radio traffic.

2. Own Situation:

Admiral Skagerrak:

Twenty boats were on minesweeping duty. Minelaying operations were started on the east coast of Jutland. Convoying was carried out without incident.

2 Sept. 1944

Western and Central Baltic Sea:

Forty-six boats were on minesweeping operations. One mine was swept in the Pomeranian Bay, another southwest of Bornholm, and another in Kiel Bay. The steamer WELLBURG (1,923 BRT) sank in the Kiel Bay after striking a mine.

At 0851 a low-flying Marauder with American markings and unsuccessfully fired at by submarine U "1024", north of Hela. At 1130 five Boston planes and three fighters attacked an eastbound convoy west of Libau with bombs and gunfire and caused slight damage. One attacker was shot down.

Admiral, Eastern Baltic:

A report has been made on measures to be taken after relations with Finland are broken off.

Due to weather conditions patrol of Narva and of the net barrages was made impossible. Likewise the laying of mine-field "Seeigel X b". had to be postponed for 24 hours. Battery Sillamae 1 was heavily shelled during the night of 1 Sept.

Escorting was carried out according to plan. Transfer of the 563rd Grenadier Division from Danzig-Gdynia to Reval/Baltic Port was started.

On 1 Sept. 3,608 tons were transported to Riga and 1,939 tons to Reval to supply Army Group North. In August, 69,489 tons were taken to Riga and 51,319 tons to Reval, in all 120,808 tons; in addition, 659 motor vehicles and guns. This amounts to a daily average of 3,897 tons and 21 motor vehicles and guns.

Report of the 9th Defense Division about action of six PT boats to destroy wreck of submarine U "250" in the night of 31 Aug. as per 1 Skl 27113/44 Skdos. in War Diary, Part C. Volume III.

At 2315 on 2 Sept. Naval Command Baltic Sea ordered all naval forces in sea-worthy condition to be ready for action at three hours' notice.

IV. Submarine Warfare

No reports of special importance have been received from the Atlantic and the West Area.

2 Sept. 1944

Ten boats ready for action are in the Gulf of Finland.

Six boats are in the shipyards of Danzig, Gdynia, and Koenigsberg.

The submarine U "19" sank a minesweeper in the Black Sea in CL 1577 at 0522.

Naval Staff, Submarine Division notifies Naval Staff, Operations Division of directive, according to which six "Schnorchel" boats of Group "Center" will be put under command of Commander, Submarines, Norway as soon as replacements arrive from Germany.

V. Aerial Warfare.

West Area:

Nothing to report.

Likewise no flights over Reich Territory took place.

Mediterranean Theater:

Five hundred and fifty enemy planes from Italy entered the Serbian area and attacked various places in the Nish-Kraljevo area and in Rumania.

On the Italian front attacks were concentrated on the Adriatic front and on the Po Valley, where particularly transport objectives were bombed.

High Command, Air, Operations Staff informs Naval Staff, Operations Division that Air Command Southeast has received orders to confirm presence of forces in Alexandria every two or three days.

East Area:

From the eastern front 547 own flights and 2,075 enemy flights were reported on 1 Sept. We lost four planes; 81 enemy planes were shot down.

2 Sept. 1944

VI. Warfare in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

1. Area of German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

In the morning of 1 Sept. eleven troop transports escorted by one destroyer and eight corvettes passed the Strait of Gibraltar eastbound. Two troop transports and two auxiliary carriers arrived at Gibraltar. One landing ship of an unidentified type departed for the Atlantic in the evening of 1 Sept.

In the afternoon of 1 Sept. our guns forced one destroyer south of Cape Martin to turn off. At the same time and in the night of 1 Sept. Monte Agel and La Tourbie were shelled by destroyers.

In the night of 1 Sept. 14 ships were detected by radar and by sight in the area between Toulon and Cape Camarat. Two ships were southeast of Imperia. During the day enemy ships were again detected in the area southeast of Nizza by radar.

During the night one boat group was on alternating course off the coast, 18 miles west of Tino.

The enemy undertook lively reconnaissance and fighter-bomber actions in the Genoa Bay. During the night of 1 Sept. continuous attacks with bombs and rockets were carried out against three naval ferries and one motor minesweeper between St. Remo and Genoa. The boats arrived at Savona. Two ferries were damaged. During the night naval landing craft convoys were also attacked with bombs between Genoa and Spezia. No damage was caused.

A merchant ship under construction was hit by two bombs and sank in a favorable blocking position during the fighter-bomber attack on Genoa at noon.

Own Situation:

Convoy and patrol tasks were carried out as planned. Two minesweeping boats arrived at Imperia after having sighted two large vessels east of Mentone.

2 Sept. 1944

2. Area Naval Group South;

a. Adriatic Sea:

At noon on 1 Sept. four destroyers and three of four minesweeping boats were present in the area Pescara-Cattolica. Cattolica was continuously shelled by guns and attacked by fighter-bombers. Evacuation of the place was ordered with consent of the Army. Demolition was executed according to plan.

Two explosions occurred on a passenger steamboat. The ship was beached.

East-southeast of Caorle, two "Siebel" ferries laid 60 additional coastal mines "A".

b. Aegean Sea:

In the evening of 1 Sept. an enemy submarine was sighted north of Milos and attacked by submarine chasers. In the evening of 2 Sept. an enemy submarine surfaced in the harbor of Nikolaos on Crete and submerged after being shelled.

During the night of 1 Sept. the enemy developed lively aerial activity against ship movements in the western Greek area near Milos and Porto Lago. The war freighter PELIKAN was attacked while alone en route between Paros and Iraklion. No damage of importance was caused. Also during the night 20 enemy planes were in action.

Commanding Admiral, Aegean Sea reports that he has placed the branch of the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping under the command of the Commanding Officer, Supply and Sea Transports after Greece was declared a war zone.

c. Black Sea:

For organizational purposes Group South has - after discontinuation of Naval Liaison Staff, Rumania - placed the three motor minesweeper divisions on the Danube and the Danube Flotilla in all matters pertaining to personnel and deployment, under the command of Inspector of Minesweeping, Danube. He has orders to take charge of all naval vessels on the Danube and send them into action with the Danube Flotilla and motor minesweeper groups in agreement with Commanding General, Southeast.

2 Sept. 1944

No minelaying was reported on " Sept. A belated report speaks of a total of five mines swept on 31 Aug. and 1 Sept.

Motor Minesweeper Group, Central Danube sent information that one enemy plane was probably shot down in the night of 1 Sept. Danube Flotilla reports that enemy resistance near Bazias has increased considerably. Vessels trying to break through will have to expect severest gun and machine-gun fire.

Air Force Command Southeast reports the mooring of five small war vessels on the north bank at km 630 on 1 Sept., a concentration of ships - among them two large vessels - at km 597, and two warships with large funnels on westerly course at 590. The island of Ada-Kaleh has been occupied by the enemy since noon on 1 Sept. Our anti-aircraft gun post Gura Vey was silenced by the Rumanians.

Commanding General, Southeast has put the Rehe combat group at Prahovo under the command of Major General Bazing for the operation "Wassernixe" as well as all anti-aircraft units located on the south bank and those on the north bank below Oraova. In addition to other units Major Rehe has taken charge of one alarm battalion consisting of Navy, army and air Force Personnel.

VIII. Situation Far East.

Naval Attache, Tokyo reports as follows:

"Situation in the Pacific Ocean remains almost the same. The Americans are striving to wipe out the last remnants of the Japanese forces in the Marianas and New Guinea. Except for daily aerial attacks on Palau and Yap, comparative quietness prevails. Preparations for new offensives in the direction of the Philippines are distinctly discernable. However recently the Japanese Naval Staff is of the opinion that the offensive will not start before the presidential election, since set-backs would not be advantageous for Roosevelt. At the most, attempts at landing on intermediary islands might be made prior to that date.

3 Sept. 1944

Items of Political Importance.

According to United Press report, the U.S. Ambassador to Madrid expressed his conviction that Spain would in the future collaborate even more closely with the Allies than before. Negotiations for use of Barcelona as a free port for shipment of goods from the U.S.A. are practically completed. It is said that an agreement was also reached that Spanish airfields could be used for trans-Atlantic service by American air-transport companies.

Radio Sofia announced the formation of the new cabinet with Muravieff as Prime Minister.

According to the German official news agency the Portuguese Government is said to be at the point of breaking off diplomatic relations with Japan because of differences about Timor.

The Finnish parliament convened on the evening of 2 Sept. The Prime Minister subsequently explained to the Finnish nation in a radio address that the Russian Government was asked on 25 Aug. by way of Stockholm whether or not it was willing to receive a Finnish delegation to discuss an armistice. The Russians stipulated that Finland must first break off diplomatic relations with Germany and that the German troops must have left Finnish soil by 15 Sept. Great Britain and the U.S.A. were informed; no objections were raised. The Finnish Government today decided to ask the German Government to withdraw its troops. The German Government consented. Finland does not know the terms which will be imposed on her, but unconditional surrender is not demanded. The Government received a vote of confidence from the Finnish parliament.

Conference on the Situation with the Chief, Naval Staff at 1100.

I. Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division reports that the heavy batteries on the Channel coast still have considerable stores of ammunition at their disposal (Battery "Lindemann" 1,000 rounds).

II. Naval Staff, Intelligence Division: The Foreign Office reports that diplomatic relations between the Reich and Finland were broken off last night. The Finnish Government yielded to the Russian demands under Anglo-American pressure.

3 Sept. 1944

Since the military situation - as far as Finland is concerned - is at present in no way critical, Finnish steps can only be explained thus that they reckon with a German defeat in the long run, a defeat in which they do not wish to be entangled. It may also be that the Anglo-Americans are about to land in northern Europe. This is considered to have set the time for Finland's action.

With the latter view in mind the report of our Security Agent at Stockholm of 1 Sept. is noteworthy. It mentions that the Swedes count on an early action on the part of the Allies against Norway.

The military, naval and Air Force Attaches are in agreement with regard to the Swedish attitude in case of an invasion of the northern areas and state their opinion as follows:

"The Swedish papers of 1 Sept. repeat Eisenhower's declaration according to which the German forces have been weakened to a point that they would be able to render further resistance only with the help of forces drawn from Denmark, Norway and Finland. He would do everything in his power to render withdrawal of these troops from their present sectors more difficult. This declaration and the cessation of Swedish navigation in the Baltic and North Sea in the face of the overall situation of the war, have led to discussions about a possible invasion in the northern area (Denmark, Southern Norway, Northwestern Germany; occasionally also Central and even Northern Norway are mentioned). In case of a successful invasion of the northern area - no matter at what point - the military attaches of the Legation Stockholm agree that Sweden will keep out of the war in the military sense as long as Germany is able to undertake reprisals. Release of American planes, which made emergency landings, for return to England might be analogous to release of German planes; this is possible though not probable, considering other unfriendly acts against Germany. The Ambassador subscribes to the opinion held by the military attaches."

The situation in Slovakia has become more acute. Reich Security Central Office considers the Lakatos government in Hungary unfriendly towards Germany. This is supposed to be the only reason why Horthy has not resigned. Change of the situation in Budapest is held to be possible in the near future.

A report from a supposedly reliable source states that in England one complete airborne army and one regular army are ready for transport by air. Complete supply by air including fuel is felt to be assured.

3. Sept. 1944

According to other information received, great anxiety is felt in British circles about the growing power of Russia. This problem ostensibly was the cause of Churchill's journey to Italy. Polard is supposed to have been abandoned.

According to an enemy radio report V1 firing was directed against the Paris sector for the first time.

III. Inquiry made by Commander in Chief, Navy, whether operations "Tanne West", "Tanne Ost", "Birke" and supply of Northern Army Group can be accomplished simultaneously, is answered by Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Shipping and Transport Branch that this is possible, if at least five ships are relinquished by the Commanding Admiral, Submarines. In the reply to the Commander in Chief, Navy, the Chief, Naval Staff orders that attention be called once more to the fact that the necessary prerequisites for execution of operation "Tanne Ost" do not exist; only untrained and inexperienced troops - drafted at random - would be available. Only the naval gunners of the Pillau - Gdynia area chosen for the operations, have the proper qualifications.

Naval Staff, Operations Division, Chief of Operations Branch will transmit reply by telephone to Commander in Chief, Navy.

In a restricted Circle:

IV. Army Situation

Western Front:

Report about Fuehrer order for further operations on the western front as per l/Skl 2719/44 Gkdos. Chefs. of 3 Sept. Copy in War Diary, Special File Invasion 3 Sept. 1944.

Today, too, the British-Canadian forces continued their break-through attack to the north with superior tank forces and under strong protection from the air. They reached the Doullens - Arras area south of Cambrai with strong forces. Advance detachments pushed forward to Lille - Valenciennes and Mons.

The 15th Army retreated behind the Somme and took up a defensive position along the line St. Pol - Bethune - La Bassee - Seclin - Orchies. The sector boundary group of General Brandenberger (Remaining Staff of 7th Army High Command) was put into action between Douai and Le Cateau to prevent a break-through by the enemy to the northeast.

3 Sept. 1944

In the sector of the 5th Armored Army the enemy pushed past Avesnes to Maubeuge. Fighting is still going on.

The 1st Army retreated behind the Meuse between Charleville and Stenay in severe fighting and is defending the Chiers sector with weak forces in flank-group position.

The enemy drew up in force in front of the 1st Army and tank spearheads tested for weak points. He was repulsed at Longwy and Diedenhofen, west of Pont a Mousson. The defense front on the Moselle from Diedenhofen to Nancy, with advanced positions at Conflance and Dornum, is becoming stabilized.

It is to be expected that the enemy will start his push towards the north on 3 Sept. to reach the V 1 bases, once the forces present in the Arras - Cambrai - Valenciennes area have caught up. Likewise the American forces will continue their push along the line Metz - Nancy to the north.

Today's enemy success in the area of the 5th Armored Army and 15th Army must also be traced to the lack of sufficient anti-tank weapons of various kinds. The deliveries requested have not yet been made and the troops are therefore at the mercy of enemy tanks. There is also a scarcity of anti-tank close defense weapons.

Further reports from southern France are lacking.

The 9th and 14th American Armies in England were released by FUSAG (First U.S. Army Group, Tr.N.) and have been put under the direct command of Eisenhower. He can thereby exploit his present successes in France by putting new armies into action.

The forces held in readiness in England near London consist of 20 large formations and the airborne army.

The 7th American Army in southern France is no longer under the command of Wilson; it was put under the direct command of Eisenhower.

Switzerland:

The mobilization measures ordered by Switzerland exceed the admitted extent. They are, however, of a purely defensive character. According to official Swiss reports, the likelihood of Allied troops marching through Switzerland is held to be improbable at the moment. However, there is the firm determination on the part of Switzerland to defend at any given time the neutrality of the country against any attack.

3 Sept. 1944

Italian Front:

After our retreat north of the Arno had remained concealed to the enemy for several days, he yesterday advanced with strong motorized forces on both sides of Pisa, at Pontedera, and on both sides of Empoli across the Arno. His forces, however, were in the main stopped by our troops guarding the rear.

Since it must be expected that the enemy forces across the Arno will be increased in the course of the day, our rear-guard troops stationed far in front of our main line of defense were taken back to points closer to the defense line.

On the Adriatic coast the enemy continued his severe break-through attacks. The intention of the 8th British Army to bring about a decisive break-through with strong forces near Cattolica in order to cut off the left German flank, was frustrated by the stubborn resistance of our soldiers fighting heroically. The enemy suffered severe casualties in these combats; more than 50 tanks were destroyed.

Eastern Front:

Southern Ukraine Army Group:

In the Dobruja the Russians have crossed the Rumanian-Bulgarian border. Advancing along the southern bank of the Danube past Silistra they arrived at Turturcaya in Bulgaria. Near Russe the Soviets formed a bridgehead and, in their advance against western Rumania, reached Alexandria north of the Danube.

Strong enemy attacks were smashed at the mountain passes of Transylvania; eastward of Brasov the front is moving to the north.

Northern Ukraine Army Group:

In the extended Vistula bridgehead our attack - aimed at the closing of the still existing gap - was continued against persistently very tough and dogged enemy resistance with small gain of terrain. Some of the attacking units were driven back beyond their starting positions; they were, however, able to regain them.

Disarming of the Slovakian Army in the German area of operations in eastern Slovakia is making further progress. Some points of resistance are being defended tenaciously. The severest fighting is raging in the areas east of Bardiev

CONFIDENTIAL

3 Sept. 1944

north of Presov and about Poprad.

Central and Northern Army Group:

The uprising in the old part of the city of Warsaw collapsed. The southern Czerniakow was likewise cleared of the enemy.

Pressure of the enemy continued northeast of Warsaw. Local breaches were cleared by destroying 35 tanks; further concentrations of troops were smashed by the artillery and Air Force.

Only slight combat activities in other sectors of the front. Bringing up of reinforcements is being continued by the enemy at an accelerated pace north of the Dvina, in the area of Modohn.

In addition, report on directive for further warfare in the east as per l/Skl B Nr. 2716/44 Gkdc. Chfs. of 3 Sept. in War Diary, Part B, Vol. V.

Special Items.

I. Finland and Eastern Baltic Sea.

At 0025 Naval Staff, Operations Division, Chief of Operations Branch telephones the Commanding Admiral, Eastern Baltic to call his attention to the possibility of a break in relations between Germany and Finland. He was given notice in advance that all German war and merchant ships should leave Finnish ports. It is of primary importance to prevent seizure of German ships. The departure of the forces of the 9th Defense Division must therefore be synchronized with the departure of the transport vessels. Ships in Kemi and Oulu are exempted. Order for operation "Birke" must be expected. All Finnish ships in the German sphere of influence are to be retained.

According to a report by Admiral, Eastern Baltic, communication with the 9th Defense Division is being maintained.

At 0135 Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Shipping and Transport Branch, informs the Fuehrer Headquarters by telegram, for transmission to Commander in Chief, Navy and Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy, about the orders given so far:

CONFIDENTIAL

3 Sept. 1944

- "1. All Finnish ships in German ports are to be detained; measures against scuttling have been taken.
2. All German ships en route to Finland are sailing for German or Baltic ports.
3. All German ships in Finnish ports, with the exception of Oulu and Kemi, have to depart at once and to make for German or Baltic ports; arrivals must be reported.
4. German ships in Oulu and Kemi have been put at the disposal of the 20th Army Command for evacuation of personnel and materials.
5. Two transport vessels are at the disposal of Admiral, Eastern Baltic, beginning 3 Sept. for evacuation of people from Finland to Baltic Countries. Further transport orders will be issued."

At 0315 Naval Command Baltic Sea advises Naval Staff of the directive sent to the Admiral, Eastern Baltic, which reads as follows:

"Commitment of the Navy in the Gulf of Finland will remain concentrated near "Seeigel". - In addition, you will forthwith

1. carry out the quick closing operations "1", "2", and "3";
2. reinforce weak points of "Seeigel" between Tyters/Hogland and Hogland/Finnish coastal islands;
3. order submarines close to west of "Seeigel" and extend patrol line as far as Finnish coastal islands."

The Admiral attaches to the Fuehrer Headquarters is subsequently being informed by Naval Staff, Operations Division

At 0415 the following directive issued by Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff is received:

- "1. The German General appointed to the Supreme Command of the Finnish Armed Forces is to be informed of operation "Birke" by 20th Mountain Army Command and Naval Attache Helsinki.
2. In case order for operation "Birke" is given, seizure and destruction of Finnish tonnage in Finnish ports will be ordered separately. Preparations are to be continued. Utmost improvisation is essential, since defense of bridge-heads is entirely out of the question due to lack of forces

3 Sept 1944

and because prize crews can only be furnished by 20th Mountain Army Command to a limited extent.

3. No transfer of prize crews by Navy to Finnish ports. Submarines and PT boats with prize crews must be kept in readiness; assembly of submarines off ports in the Gulf of Bothnia only upon order.

4. Decision about operation "Tanne" will follow."

Naval Staff, Operations Division transmits the above directive to Naval Command, Baltic Sea; Admiral, Eastern Baltic Sea; Naval Liaison Staff; Fleet; 20th Mountain Army Command; and Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Shipping and Transport Branch beginning

at 0700 and requests the 20th Mountain Army Command to carry out instruction under 1. as there is no certainty that Naval Attache Helsinki is already sufficiently informed about operation "Birke".

At 0515 Naval Command, Baltic Sea received the following belated "Most Immediate Blitz Telegram Message" sent at 2140 of 2 Sept. by Admiral, Eastern Baltic Sea. Naval Command, Baltic Sea transmitted it to Naval Staff, Operations Division at 0655. It reads as follows:

"1. The Russian ultimatum demands severing of diplomatic relations with Germany before peace negotiations can begin. Ultimatum expired today at 2400. It is expected that majority of Finnish Parliament will vote in favor of the Russian conditions.

2. Upon questioning whether the Finnish Armed Forces would carry out the demand of the Russians to intern German forces Valve simply answered:

"I do hope that the Marshal will not give an order to that effect."

3. Valve refused to accept an invitation extended by the Commander, 9th Defense Division with the remark: I do not wish to play the role of a traitor among friends in case things go wrong.

4. Happenings are apt to take place faster than had been expected.

5. Measures taken:

- a. Starting at 2400 immediate readiness of all forces;
- b. Begin taking aboard supplies of strongpoint Kotka at once;

3 Sept. 1944

- c. Radio Unit Hamina Hogland has been warned.
 - d. One group of submarines at Reval must be held in readiness for duty in Aaland Sea patrolling the navigable area there and watching for approaching Swedish warships or Finnish vessels. Submarines will sail on order of Naval Command, Baltic Sea.
6. Concerning seizure of Finnish merchant ships. Voluntary departure from Finnish ports can probably not be achieved as long as the Finnish Government does not issue an order to that effect. This would have to be done through diplomatic channels. Departure by force, running the ships with German crews - this could be done only to a limited extent - would meet with strongest resistance on the part of the Finnish population; fighting would certainly follow. Without pilots the sailing from ports through inner leads is difficult and on account of coastal batteries not possible. Scuttling at the pier would create strong animosity even in circles sympathetic to Germany. This would provoke active counter-measures against our defense forces. Precise orders will have to be issued about how Finland is to be treated; either as a traitor or as a conquered ally. It must be kept in mind that any hostile act can only be committed after the German colony has been evacuated. As far as it is known no destructive measures, such as blowing up of shore batteries, evacuation of German types of planes, etc. are contemplated. The most suitable means for scuttling of steamers would be adhesive mines with time fuses. Should this be done by Command Heye as quickly as possible?
7. Cellarius learnt through an agent that Sweden has consented to cede a small area of northern Sweden to Russia; Sweden in turn is to be allowed to occupy the Aaland Islands.
8. How is operation "Tanne Ost" to be executed under the present circumstances? Resistance on the part of the Finns has to be reckoned with, as orders by the Marshal will probably be carried out faithfully even by the army. Only thus can lasting peace be secured. This opinion is even held by men of the opposition.

This telegram was relayed to Admiral, Fuehrer Headquarters for Commander in Chief, Navy with the following notes added by Chief, Naval Staff:

As to 5:

Measures taken are appropriate. In the meantime, order for departure of German ships has been given to Admiral Eastern Baltic.

3 Sept. 1944

As to 6:

Question about treatment of Finnish ships in Finnish ports has not yet been fully clarified by orders given so far by Armed Forces High Command. Action by Naval Staff will be possible only after a directive has been received from Armed Forces High Command about the future attitude towards the Finns.

As to 8:

The fact that execution of operation "Tanne Ost" is not clear, is well known to Armed Forces High Command. Execution with insufficient means cannot be proposed by this Command."

In this connection the following situation report, submitted by the 9th Defense Division at 0600 by way of Naval Command, Baltic Sea was relayed to Commander in Chief, Navy at the Fuehrer Headquarters:

"Population absolutely quiet. Unsolicited help was offered by the Finnish Navy for the evacuation of supplies, etc. According to local impression the Finnsaare not expected to cause any difficulties, as long as Germany does not resort to warlike measures against Finland. The officers' corps of the Finnish Navy is deeply depressed by events, but is loyal to Mannerheim. German measures, let us say of the type of operation "Birke", would meet with full resistance even by officers siding with Germany and would do away with the internal dissension in the Finnish Officers Corps in favor of Germany".

At 0815 The following telegram was received from Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff:

- "1. On account of the resolution passed by the Finnish parliament that German troops must leave Finnish territory by 15 Sept., the Fuehrer has ordered immediate start of operation "Birke". Occupy the Shyan position. Supply 20th Mountain Army Command by way of Norway.
2. Assault Artillery Brigade 303 to be transferred to Denmark
3. All forces and supplies not needed in Northern Finland to be evacuated. Finnish ships in Finnish ports are not to be seized for the present. - Number of men, time, and place of loading to be reported to Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Shipping and Transport Branch.
4. The Gulf of Bothnia is zone of operations for our naval forces.

3 Sept. 1944

5. Further directives for execution of operation "Birke" and order for operation "Tanne" will follow."

Naval Staff, Operations Division, will relay directive by telegram to Naval Command, Baltic Sea; Admiral, Eastern Baltic Sea; Naval Liaison Staff, Field, 9th Defense Division; Naval Command, Norway; and Admiral, Arctic Coast beginning at 1145.

At 1210 Naval Attache, Helsinki reports:

"1. Finns refuse pilot assistance; the reason given is that corresponding German measures reportedly have been in force for several days.

2. Propose that order for merchant shipping in Gulf of Bothnia be supplemented to the effect that ships shall try to escape by way of Swedish territorial waters. Naval Command Baltic Sea, Operations Staff, Admiral, Eastern Baltic Sea, Chief of Seatransport, Eastern Baltic Sea have likewise been notified."

At 1345 Armed Forces High Command, Field Economic Office relays the message that the Finnish steamers GOTTFRIED, OTTO H. and NAJADEN - port of departure Danzig - are to be seized at once by order of the Chief of Staff, Armed Forces High Command. Subsequently, Naval Staff, Operations Division relays a corresponding directive to Naval Command, Baltic.

At 1355 Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Shipping and Transport Branch informs the parties concerned that German merchant ships in Finland have received orders to leave Finnish ports even without pilot assistance and to make for German or Baltic ports.

At 1530 Naval Attache, Helsinki announces that the Finnish order refusing pilot assistance has been recalled. They hope that reciprocal action will be taken by Germany

This message the Naval Staff, Operations Division, forwarded to Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff; admiral, Fuehrer Headquarters; and Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Shipping and Transport Branch.

At 1535 the following report by telephone is received from Admiral on Special Duty:

"1. Finnish ships in the German sphere of influence are to be retained until confirmation has been received that the Finns will cause no difficulties in Finland. Release of Finnish ships only after corresponding order by the Armed Forces High Command.

3 Sept. 1944

2. Operation "Tanne" will presumably be out of the question due to lack of manpower (Army).
3. The Commander in Chief, Navy has at once put at the disposal of the Fuehrer 20,000 men. Further particulars will be clarified by Captain Schumann who is at present at the Fuehrer Headquarters.
4. The Commander in Chief, Navy will in all probability start his return trip tonight.

At 1620 Naval Command Baltic Sea reports by telephone that the Commander of the 9th Defense Division received the promise from General Valve for all possible support to accomplish evacuation. Pilot service for warships and ships sailing under Reich flag will be continued, but not for merchant ships - the latter in retaliation for retaining Finnish merchant ships.

At 1720 Admiral on Special Duty informs Naval Staff, Chief, Operations Division from Fuehrer Headquarters, that the Armed Forces High Command received instruction today at noon to obtain confirmation without delay from the Finns, by way of General Erfurt, that they will in no way make our evacuation difficult. The Finns are to be told that their ships will then be released. The order was issued at the Fuehrer conference that no war materials should be delivered to Finland. But this matter will have to be clarified finally by the Armed Forces High Command. This clarification of the order will determine to what extent Finnish ships retained in Germany will be unloaded.

At 1735 Naval Staff, Chief of Operations Division, directs Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Chief of Shipping and Transport Branch by telephone to clarify the question concerning the unloading of Finnish ships in German ports with Armed Forces High Command, Supply and Transportation Office, Scandinavia.

At 2105 Naval Command Baltic Sea reports that in accordance with the directive by Naval Staff, Operations Division of 23 Aug. the Fleet and the 2nd Task Force have been informed about the mine situation in the Gulf of Finland. Admiral, Eastern Baltic has orders to report directly any future changes.

Further telephone conversations with the Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff (Navy) reveal that the Armed Forces High Command is in possession of positive reports from the 20th Mountain Army Command and the German General that Finns have promised full support of evacuation.

3 Sept. 1944

On the basis of this directive issued by the Armed Forces High Command and transmitted by Operations Staff (Navy), the Naval Staff, Operations Division, issues

at 2355 to Naval Command, Baltic Sea, North, Norway; Admiral, Eastern Baltic; Armed Forces High Command, Supply and Transportation Office, Scandinavia; Reich Commissar for Shipping; Admirals of Navy Office, Hamburg, Bremen, Stettin, Gdynia, Danzig with copy to Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Coastal Defense Branch and Shipping and Transport Branch the following order:

- "1. Finns have promised support of evacuation, therefore:
2. release Finnish ships retained so far. Unload ships before release, no matter whether cargo is German or Finnish Army supply. - After unloading, all German anti-aircraft guns, arms and personnel must be taken off the the ships.
3. Naval Commands should report execution of order under 2."

The message of the Reich Foreign Minister instructing the Ambassador to depart at once in protest of the insulting speech delivered by the Finnish Foreign Minister caused Armed Forces High Command to order the military attaches to leave Finland, too. Naval Staff, Operations Division, has come to an agreement with Armed Forces High Command that Rear Admiral von Bonin shall for the present remain in Finland as Chief of the Naval Liaison Staff. A directive to that effect has been given.

II. Situation West Area.

Naval Staff, Operations Division relayed to Group West; Naval Command, North; Admiral, Netherlands, and Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Nautical Science Branch the following extract of the Fuehrer directive concerning future warfare in the area of Commanding General West:

"1. Our battle-weary forces on the one hand and the impossibility of bringing up sufficient reinforcement on the other hand do not permit the designation, at this point, of a line which must be held or can be held with certainty.

All demands, therefore, upon gaining as much time as possible for organizing and concentrating new forces and for consolidating

3 Sept. 1944

the western defenses, as well as upon annihilating the enemy forces in minor local engagements.

2. To accomplish this I order the following:

The right flank and center (including 1st Army Command) of the Western Army have to contest every inch of ground in dogged, delaying fighting. Local penetrations will have to be faced. Encirclement of considerable forces must be avoided. The security of the Western Defenses and of the West Wall, for Roermond to the Swiss border, remains for the present the task of the Chief, Army Equipment and Commander, Replacement Army and of the forces put under his command.- First Army Command is to receive command of the approaches to Western Defenses, the region north of the Rhine - Marne Canal. Allocation of forces and size of Command Post of 1st Army Command will conform with the task assigned. Commanding General, West will propose the time when 1st Army Command can take over.-

3. Urgently needed re-conditioning - especially in the case of armored forces and artillery - can be accomplished most speedily by withdrawing severely battered forces behind the West Wall. This is to be attempted on the largest scale possible. Plans with time schedules are to be reported to me. As to personnel, Army Group G has to bring its formations up to full strength during and after completion of its retreat by using men of all services still in fighting condition. The Commanding General, West will establish what weapons and equipment are needed for speedy activation of Army Group G. - An organizational staff on which likewise the Navy and Air Force is represented, is to be set up by the Chief, Army Equipment and Commander, Replacement Army and to be sent to Army Group G. Its task will be designated by me."

Group West, Naval Command, North, and Admiral, Netherlands received the following additional directive from Naval Staff, Operations Division:

"The Commander in Chief, Navy has ordered the beginning of the evacuation of Navy stores west of the West Wall including the Netherlands, in as far as these are not essential for our combat troops."

3 Sept. 1944

III. Situation Balkan Area

a. According to Reich Security Central Office report of 2 Sept. on the situation in Bulgaria, negotiations with Anglo-Americans in Cairo have been interrupted. Russian troops have reached the boundary of the Dobruya and Silistria. Regents apparently disagree. Filoff stands alone.

b. In a monitored raidogram sent by Group South to Admiral Black Sea, the orders in regard to Bulgaria, orally given by Commanding Admiral, Naval Group South to Admiral, Black Sea, are designated as being still in force. They read:

- "1. Take charge of naval personnel remaining in Bulgaria. Care of their interests rests with German Military Mission.
2. Troops to be trained for possible land combat.
3. Attempt release of highest possible number of internees who are poorly guarded by using all means and tricks that can be thought of. Term "shipwrecked" to be used in as broad a sense as possible. It must be our aim to raise the striking power of our combat troops by increasing their number; even unarmed soldiers put to proper use will help to accomplish that.
4. Clarification of all happenings in Rumania with the help of the officers stationed there. Results to be reported continuously."

c. - Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, informs Naval Staff, High Command, Air, and Commanding General, Southeast, of the Fuehrer's agreement to intentions reported by Commanding General, Southeast.

Naval Staff, Operations Division relays the following excerpts of the telegram in question to Group South, Vienna:

"1. The Fuehrer has agreed to the following plans of Commanding General, Southeast:

- a. Nikoloff and Stojanoff with their staffs are to be arrested unless they are in definite agreement with German cause. This is probable in the case of Stojanoff who in his last orders speaks of correct behavior towards the German Armed Forces.

3 Sept. 1944

- b. Departure of Bulgarian troops from Serbia and Macedonia is to be prevented, if necessary with armed force.
 - c. Escape of internees with orders to push through in direction of border.
 - d. Materials belonging to the armed Forces to be destroyed, if necessary with the aid of the Air Force.
2. Chief of the Military Mission to remain in Sofia for the present. Action of Special Unit (Tanks) does not promise any success under present conditions; it remains therefore in the area of Nish.
3. It is essential to concentrate as many German troops as possible in new Bulgaria and to form a center of a national Bulgarian movement in this area, supported by certain units of the Bulgarian Armed Forces.
- d. Upon inquiry Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff cabled to Naval Staff, Operations Division:
- "1. It is definitely intended to block the Dardanelles (operation "Fliegenpilz-Suedteil").
2. Commitments of minelayers for dispersal movements are of great urgency; readiness for operation "Fliegenpilz-Suedteil" has been called off for the present; it will be ordered again by Armed Forces High Command when the situation warrants it."

Naval Staff, Operations Division submits the decision to Group South and Admiral, Aegean Sea. Copy of order as per 1/Skl I op 2720 /44 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, part C, Vol. XIV a.

IV. Adriatic Sea.

- a. With regard to directive by Naval Staff, Operations Division concerning PT boat commitments (War Diary 2 Sept., Special Events, VI). Group West reported the circumstances which so far have delayed the intended offensive action of the boats along the Italian east coast. All preparations for action are made with regard to the 3rd and 21st PT Boat Flotilla. (Transfer of 21st PT Boat Flotilla to Corfu.)

3 Sept. 1944

Besides, offensive actions by "TA" torpedo boats ("TA" torpedo boats are of foreign origin. - Tr.N.) are planned for the next new moon period.

b. Decisions made by Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, concerning directive for strategy in the Adriatic area (see War Diary 13 Aug.) are contained in telegram of 3 Sept. Copy as per 1/Skl 2725/44 Gkdos. Chefs. in War Diary, Part C. Vol. XIV. According to them the defense position on the peninsula of Salvore Fianosa in Istria, proposed by Naval Staff, cannot be built, since a defensive front along the Punta Grossia - Riva di Montriena line has already been examined by Commanding General, Southwest, and is in process of completion. Naval Staff, however, must take all necessary measures in conjunction with Commanding General, Southwest, to check effectively the enemy's advance towards the harbors of Trieste and Fiume.

Naval Staff, Operations Division has given instructions to Group South and Admiral, Adriatic Sea, with copy to German Naval Command, Italy, to take the matter up immediately with Commanding General, Southwest, concerning execution of plan, and to report intentions. According to the prescribed course of the front line, Pisano and Moschiena will have to be replaced by Punta Riva and Riva di Moschiena.

-

Situation 3 Sept.

I. Situation West Area.

1. Enemy Situation:

Twenty-nine planes belonging to the 19th Group were detected on operations. The exact area of reconnaissance was not discernible. Two British vessels were located in the incoming escort area AM.

According to an agent's report on 23 Aug. through "Ostrow", direct supply routes from the U.S.A. to France are being organized quickly.

According to this report, the first large convoy of about 60 freighters arrived in Cherbourg and in other smaller Normandy ports on 22 Aug. after previous arrival of smaller convoys.

3 Sept. 1944

Beginning September the entire supply system for Europe is going to be changed; only supply for troops stationed in England or for depots there will be shipped to Great Britain.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

Transports were carried out between Lorient and Quiberon by five armed fishing vessels and three motor coaster sailing vessels.

Armed Forces High Command radioed at noon to all fortress commanders: "Combat activity of encircled fortresses with 25,000 to 30,000 men each still appears to be too passive according to report received. Enemy forces must be engaged in front of the fortresses by shocktroops detachments and by offensive attacks; losses must be inflicted on the enemy continuously, thereby raising the fighting spirit of our troops.

Air transports bringing provisions to the fortresses have been delayed due to the elimination of air bases near Diedenhofen, planned for this purpose."

On 2 Sept. the enemy launched his second, all-out offensive against Brest. Concentration of these attacks, which receive powerful artillery, tank and air support, was particularly heavy in the areas Guy Pavae and Gouesnou, near Guilers and La Trinite, and on the northern front of strong point Minou. All attacks, supported by the most violent shelling by mortars and artillery of all calibers, failed against dogged resistance of our troops. Heavy losses were suffered on both sides. Penetrations into the eastern part of the Fortress were sealed off in heavy fighting in the course of which Naval anti-aircraft guns and Army artillery participated effectively. Strong point Minou-Toulbroch was cut off; the position of battery 4/811 was evacuated. Enemy attacks heavily supported by artillery and tanks were stopped on peninsula Crozon and in the sector Le Conquet. A high altitude air attack by 1000 planes, dropping about 1000 bombs on the harbor and fortress, took place from 1410 to 1435. The anti-aircraft units still have at their disposal 22 heavy guns. Mining and destruction of shipping harbor was completed according to plan.

On 2 Sept. the harassing gun-fire rose in Lorient at times to a rearing cannonade with special concentration in the area Pont Scorff and southwest of Hennebout. Demand to surrender was rejected. One gun of the railway battery Plouharnel near Quiberon was made ready for firing against

3 Sept. 1944

land targets by changing the spur-gear. No reports of any importance were received from other fortresses.

Channel Area:

Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West is at present with Admiral, Netherlands at Utrecht. Further transfer to Tuebingen is contemplated. The 2nd Defense Division is stationed at Ostend and intends to transfer to Flushing in the evening to be placed under the command of Defense Commander, South Holland. Group West intends to disband with the office of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West; of the remaining flotillas from Calais, Dunkirk, and Ostend was postponed on account of bad weather. Only PT boats are still stationed at Boulogne for the purpose of minging the harbor. Transfer of the 8th Gyn-Carrier Flotillla from Bunkirk to Ostned is contemplated for the night of 3 Sept.

Admiral, Channel Coast intends to move to Schoten near Antwerp in the evening.

Seventy percent of the contemplated extent of the destruction of harbor Le Havre has been carried out. A 16,000 ton floating dock, the Normandie drydock, several quays, and 80 percent of the cranes have been blown up.

According to Commadant, Channel Islands, the enemy drops leaflets daily over the Channel islands in the form of skillfully made up new propaganda, among others a 4-page illustrated pamphlet.

Two enemy planes were downed over Guernsey. Staff of Admiral, French South Coast arrived at Besancon at 0030.

II. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters

North Sea:

One plane was shot down in the course of an unsuccessful air raid on patrol positions north of Heligoland. One boat of the Water Police on the Zuider Zee was slightly damaged by a bomb.

Mines of alarm minelayer TILLY, which sank in the North Holland Canal, were salvaged and rendered inactive.

3 Sept. 1944

Convoy 1265 bound from Hook of Holland for the Elbe River with two Hansa steamers and mine exploding vessel 153 left Hook of Holland at 2130.

Minefield I b will be laid on the night of 3 Sept. The 18th Patrol Flotilla was transferred from Borkum to the Weser River.

Around 1645 about 40 enemy planes were reported in area Wangerooge - Heligoland, possible to drop mines.

Norway - Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Twenty-three planes of the 18th Group were detected on missions.

A QP convoy consisting of an aircraft carrier, two cruisers six destroyers, and six to eight ships on course 200°, about 250 miles west of Bodø (AF 1919), was sighted by a meteorological plane. Bearings on convoy radio telephony were taken by direction finding from Svanvik to Bodø from 0652 to 1455.

Beginning at 0940 a British vessel was located inaccurately in AF 16-19 and at 2209 in AN 4357.

Own Situation:

Medium heavy exchange of gunfire in the Petsamo area was reported on 1 Sept. at 0930.

On 1 and 2 Sept. and in the night of 2 Sept. enemy air activity was only insignificant in the area of Admiral, Arctic Coast and Admiral, North Norwegian Coast.

In the night of 2 Sept. enemy planes were reported in the area from Christiansand South to Stadtlandet, in the area of Admiral, West Norwegian Coast. Fifty twin-engine planes flying in southwestern direction were sighted on 3 Sept. at 1603 near Lister. A southbound convoy was attacked at 1610 with torpedoes and bombs by 49 Beaufighters off Egersund. Casualties did not occur, three planes however were shot down. Convoy traffic was halted in the area North Norwegian Coast, between Bodø and Trondheim as well as between Trondheim and Aalesund and in the area Admiral, West Norwegian Coast between Trondheim and Bergen.

Ten northbound and 65 southbound vessels were escorted.

3 Sept. 1944

III. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea

Enemy Situation:

On 2 Sept. four minesweeper divisions and 26 war vessels or command posts were located by radio monitoring in the Gulf of Finland.

At 0753 on 2 Sept. a formation of 26 vessels was sighted in AO 3741 and was shelled at 0858 in 3744. Twelve other boats were in AO 3746. The first mentioned formation was last reported eight miles west of Gakkowo, the second six miles northwest of Hungerburg.

At 0528 on 3 Sept. Naval Command Hungerburg reported two boats in AO 3843.

Own Situation:

Admiral Skagerrak:

Twelve minesweeping boats were on duty in the Baltic Sea Entrances and three off the west coast of Jutland.

A section of minefield II was laid on the east coast of Jutland; in all 380 coastal mines "A" were laid in two rows.

At 2130 on 2 Sept. steamer ACHARLOTTE CORDS (1779 BRT) in the Skagerrak reported damage. Particulars are to follow.

Western and Central Baltic Sea.

Fiftynine boats were engaged in minesweeping operations. Two mines were cleared northwest of Pillau, one in the Pomeranian Bight, one east of the Gteifswald Oie, and one south of Langeland. The tanker HYDRA was damaged by striking a mine in the Pomeranian Bight but was able to continue on her course. The tug SEEFALKE also received slight damages after striking a mine north of buelk. Mines are suspected in the area off Libau, several planes having been observed circling around there.

Admiral, Eastern Baltic:

Due to the fact that diplomatic relations between Germany and Finland were broken off, immediate readiness has been ordered for all vessels present in Finland under command of the 9th Defense Division.

9th Defense Division reported at 0600: Population quiet, unsolicited support was offered by Finnish Navy in

3 Sept. 1944

evacuating supplies, etc. Evacuation of strong point Kotka has been started. The anti-aircraft guns on the islands will be loaded on destroyers Z "28" and Z "38" as a precautionary measure. The strong point will be held for the time being. Personnel and equipment are being evacuated from Hogland. Naval Liaison Staff is negotiating for net layers, three transports and two lifting ships at Turku. It is planned to use two minesweeping boats as tugs. So far no difficulties have arisen.

Until now no reports have been received about the seizure of the Finnish steamers GOTTFRIED, NAJADEN and OTTO H. so urgently demanded.

Five steamers and two motor schooners were retained in German ports in the area of Admiral, Skagerrak and three more Finnish steamers in the area Coastal Defense, West.

The PRINZ EUGEN, LUETZOW, EMDEN, and the 3rd Torpedo Boat Flotilla, T "1-5" are on three hour alert at Gdynia. Destroyer Z "30" will probably be ready for action on 5 Sept. at Swindmuende. The SCHEER is at sea, in the fleet training area. Four boats of the 2nd Torpedo Boat Flotilla are on convoy escort duty for troop transports Gdynia - Reval.

Nine submarines are on duty in the Gulf of Finland, three of these are stationed in the operational area in Narva Bay, and one boat between Pillau and Utoe Island for patrolling the area.

Torpedo boats T "23" and "28" were transferred to Baltic Port in the morning.

The 3rd Minesweeper Flotilla and Gun-Carrier Group are loading fortification equipment at Kotka, destination Reval. Minelayers LINZ and BRUMMER will transfer to Reval Roads and 5th PT Boat Flotilla to Baltic Port. The 6th Destroyer Flotilla consisting of destroyers Z "28" and "36" is in "Rotbuche", destroyer Z "25" is stationed on patrol 50 miles northwest of Dagoe.

On 1 Sept. seven mine detonations were observed in the area north of Reval, presumably caused by heavy sea.

On the night of 3 Sept. the 1st Minesweeper Flotilla will execute mine task "Seeigel Xb" with seven naval landing craft. On 3 Sept. from 1023 to 1041 the formation was attacked with gunfire and bombs by seven planes northwest of Kunda, four planes were brought down. F "193" was damaged and put out of action. Transfer of the 563rd Infantry Division is being accomplished; steamer DONAU, MALGACHE and SUMATRA are taking part in the transfer.

3 Sept. 1944

One hundred and fifty tons of supplies and 28 guns were brought to Riga on 2 Sept. for Army Group North.

With regard to the report of the 9th Defense Division about action of 5th PT Boat Flotilla to destroy wreck of submarine U "250" in Viborg Bay on the night of 31 Aug. the failure to use depth charges was criticized by Naval Command, Baltic Sea.

According to a report by Naval Command, Baltic Sea the PT Training Flotilla in the area of the Baltic Sea is accelerating preparations for battle readiness. A three hour alert was ordered for the flotilla.

IV. Submarine Warfare.

Submarine U "256" departed from Brest and submarine U "260" from La Pallice, both en route to Norway. From the Atlantic the submarine U "560" reported her return from the Caribbean Sea. The boat was to be supplied by submarine U "855" on 26 Aug. but was not met at point arranged. Boat is very much in need of supplies; new meeting place was arranged.

(In the Arctic Ocean submarines U "425" and U "992" have executed mine operations in the Barents sea. On 2 Sept. submarine U "225" misfired two T 3 torpedoes on south-westbound convoy in AT 7585.

Submarine U "958" is on duty in the Gulf of Finland in area south of Utoe Island to seize Finnish steamers.

No traffic and no enemy air activity was reported by submarine U "20" in the Black Sea east of the Danube estuary.

On 2 Sept. submarine U "23" reported misfiring a "Zanukoenig" torpedo on a pursuing fishing smack. All boats have orders to remain at sea for the present, to keep consumption of supplies to the lowest level possible, to steer clear of the coast, and to wait for further instructions. The boats reported ability to remain in area of operations till 6 Sept., quick transfer is held possible.

3 Sept. 1944

V. Aerial Warfare

1. West Area:

In all 900 enemy planes were reported in the area Rotterdam - Maastricht, west of St. Vith, near Lille and Calais, and 500 four-engined enemy planes with fighter escort in the area Gronau - Roermond. Airfields and other objectives were attacked. Brest was subjected to an air raid in which more than 1000 planes participated.

Two hundred and fifty fighter-bombers, fighters, and reconnaissance planes were observed during the day in the southern French area, attacking transport facilities and highway traffic, especially in area Macon.

No enemy activity in the West Area during the night of 3 Sept was reported

Six FW 190 flew reconnaissance missions in the area Lister without sighting the enemy. Fourteen planes supported our Army in the area Kiedenhofen - Verdun - Nancy.

Toul was attacked during the night of 3 Sept. by 4w of our planes. Results were observed.

2. Reich Territory:

Thirty enemy planes were sighted in area Cologne, Bonn, Aachen, 50 in the area of Freiburg, Konstanz, 90 in the area of Duesseldorf, and 50 in the area of Heligoland. No attacks however took place.

Railway objectives were attacked by 40 to 50 planes with gunfire in area Dueren, Bonn, Frankfurt/Main, Schwab, Hall, Freiburg. At noon a formation of several 100 enemy planes with fighter escort executed a severe raid on Mannheim-Ludwigshafen concentrating on the Rhine bridge.

In the morning a force of several hundred planes with fighter escort, flying in from southern Italy, attacked Szegedin and destroyed the railway bridge.

In the night of 3 Sept. only three isolated planes were reported over southern Germany and one attack with gunfire on the air base Muehlendorf-Meppenheim.

3 Sept. 1944

3. Mediterranean Theater:

Enemy activity was of the customary nature. A small formation attacked the harbor of Genoa; a warship and a merchantman were sunk. On the entire front our anti-aircraft artillery shot down five airplanes.

4. Eastern Front:

On 2 Sept. 431 own and 1281 enemy flights took place on the eastern front; two of our planes and 34 enemy planes were destroyed.

VI. Warfare in the Mediterranean and Black Sea.

1. Area German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

At 1400 on 1 Sept. a cruiser of the LONDON class passed the Straits of Gibraltar on easterly course. During the night of 31 Aug. a light cruiser and five destroyers left Gibraltar; destination unknown. The troop transports which arrived at Gibraltar from the Atlantic on 1 Sept. left again for the Atlantic on the evening of 2 Sept. escorted by two corvettes.

On 2 Sept. at noon a convoy, presumably GUS 50, consisting of 70 freighters, five tankers, 13 corvettes and one destroyer passed Gibraltar on westerly course.

During the night of 2 Sept. air reconnaissance between the French south coast and Corsica was without results since the plane crashed.

During the night of 2 Sept. the waters north of Monaco, and at noon on 3 Sept. the Naval Signal Station, Cape Martin were shelled from the sea and attacked by planes.

According to air reconnaissance one vessel, apparently a battleship and four cruisers, were on westerly course southeast of Albenga at noon. At 1430 three vessels, apparently cruisers, were reported 24 miles south-southwest of Nice on a north-northeasterly course.

3 Sept. 1944

During the day radar stations detected patrol activities south of Nice to south of Mentone.

Own Situation:

During the night of 2 Sept. convoy and patrol operations were carried out as planned; coastal patrol by three armed ferries between Imperia and San Remo reported no special incident.

On the morning of 2 Sept. two planes were presumably shot down in the course of enemy fighter-bomber attacks on Porto Fino and Palmaria. In the afternoon the pier was damaged in a fighter-bomber raid on Marina di Carrara.

2. Area Naval Group South:

Adriatic Sea:

According to a land station report, Cattolica and Riccione were shelled during the afternoon of 2 Sept. by seven enemy vessels which afterwards made off on a southerly course.

Four vessels were sighted off Pesaro-Ancona at 0430, two large and two medium sized ships off Ortona at 0700, one vessel, apparently a cruiser and one destroyer south of Ortona, and one large and two medium-sized ships on a northerly course.

Cattolica was evacuated; small-arms and the most important equipment were taken along; Batteries South, North and West were demolished.

Second degree alarm on the Italian east coast was ordered by Commanding General, Southwest for 3 Sept. at 0600.

In the afternoon of 2 Sept. a harbor defense vessel was sunk in a fighter-bomber attack on Rimini. During the night the harbor Rimini was again raided. Two "Siebel" ferries and 26 7.6 cm guns and ammunition were sunk in a fighter-bomber raid on a camouflaged location south of Carlopago.

Mopping-up operations on the island of Brac were started on 2 Sept. Detailed reports have not yet been received.

Admiral, Aegean Sea has completed his transfer from Abbazia to Trieste.

3 Sept. 1944

Aegean Sea:

During the past few days up to four submarines were sighted simultaneously off Candia.

At 0615 on 3 Sept. one motor coaster was sunk by a submarine. Submarine chase is on. Bombs dropped on Greek ports on the west coast during the night of 2 Sept. caused only small damage. Likewise an attack on Porto Lagos caused only slight damage.

Gythion on the Peloponnesos was evacuated. Harbor installations were destroyed. During the evacuation a surprise attack by guerillas took place; details have not yet been reported.

By order of Commanding General, Southeast, the Bulgarian ships ZAR FERDINAND and BURGAS at Salonika were taken over by the Naval Shore Commander. The crews have stated in writing that they left their ships voluntarily in order to return home.

According to a report sent by an ostensibly reliable agent of the Reich Security Central Office, strong concentrations of Allied landing craft and PT boats as well as the presence of Anglo-American troops were observed in the harbors of Gallipoli and Galata at the end of August. Thirty to thirty-five planes - presumably American - were sighted on the airfield of Gallipoli.

In the Sea of Marmara Italian warships allegedly transported troops to the island of Prokonosi and to Tekirgaz. Reliability of this report cannot be checked.

Black Sea:

Nothing to report.

Commanding General, Group South has taken over command of the Group at Vienna.

Danube Situation:

Local Defense Officer at the Iron Gate makes urgent request for commitment of warships since valuable special ships and cargoes are endangered. Pilots who took part in the break-through of the Iron Gate Group report that 25 tug-boats are present at Kladovo, five towing barges and 30 tug-boats at Orsova, three towing barges and six tug-boats at Milanovac and 25 tug-boats at Dobra. Mine-

3 Sept. 1944

sweeper Group Lower Danube and the Zieb force are still at Prahovo, Engineer Battalion 214 arrived there. No reports came in about the ships of sea-transport Braila.

No aerial mines were dropped on 1 and 2 Sept. One passenger boat with ten soldiers and 42 civilians aboard sank after striking a mine. In all five mines were swept according to reports.

Altogether 298 mines were swept from April to August by minesweeping vessels and 157 mines by minesweeping planes. Seventy-five mines exploded without apparent reason and 59 mines were found ashore and rendered harmless.

VII. Situation Far East

Nothing to report.

4 Sept. 1944

Items of Political Importance

Regarding decisions reached by the Finnish Government, Reuter states that the Finns have accepted the inevitable. However, their decisions are based on cool reasoning and do not signify a change of mind. The Finns would have to capitulate without further resistance and will have to accept the terms dictated by Moscow, presented to them at the same time in the name of the British Government.

Russian-Finnish relations are defined by the Russian Government in a public declaration which describes the course of the negotiations up to now. The Soviet Government is willing to assist the Finnish Army in disarming the German troops in case Germany does not withdraw her troops from Finland by 15 Sept.

The Commander in Chief, Navy returned to command post "Koralle" from the Fuehrer Headquarters.

Conference on the Situation with the Commander in Chief, Navy at 1050.

I. Chief of Operations Division, Naval Staff:

According to information from the Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters, present German-Bulgarian negotiations have reached a deadlock. The situation is not clear. A revolt has started in Salonika.

II. Naval Staff, Quartermaster General:

Concerning transfer of 20,000 men, Bureau of Naval Administration has decided in consultation with Armed Forces High Command that the soldiers shall be turned over to the Army. Formation of a naval corps is not contemplated in this case.

III. Chief of Naval Armament Bureau:

a. Acceleration of "Seehund" construction could be accomplished at the cost of Type XXIII; three "Seehund" only require the space needed for the construction of one submarine type XXIII.

The Commander in Chief, Navy decides that interference with construction of type XXIII is out of the question.

4 Sept. 1944

b. A list of vessels either under construction or in repair, to be transferred from the Netherlands to Germany, has been compiled in the meantime. It will be extremely difficult to master this additional work in the shipyards at home. An attempt will, however, be made.

c. The question arises if and how developments in Finland will influence the opinion held relative to construction of bases in the Norwegian area.

The Commander in Chief, Navy, first wishes to familiarize himself with the basic facts underlying the plans for Norway.

d. Loss of about 9,000 torpedo warheads in the area west of the West Wall has no direct effect on the supply of torpedoes, since the number of torpedoes used at the front is insignificant at present.

IV. Naval Staff, Special Weapons Division:

One "Linsen" and one "Molch" Flotilla are being transferred to the Adriatic Sea area. The first "Marder" Flotilla has arrived at Genoa; part of it is to be put into action in the Adriatic Sea.

V. The Chief, Bureau of Naval Administration

reported that 200 Nazi Political Officers will go on duty in the West Area, 20 of whom are naval officers.

In a Restricted Circle.

VI. Army Situation.

1. Western Front:

In northern France, Anglo-American forces are still being concentrated in the area Valenciennes-Maubeuge for the purpose of cutting off the 15th Army by a push to Antwerp by way of Brussels. It becomes more and more urgent to throw additional armored brigades into the fighting; this is the one and only way of preventing encirclement of the 15th Army.

St. Pol and Lillers were lost due to strong enemy pressure.

Brussels was reached by enemy tank spearheads from the area Valenciennes-Maubeuge by way of Ath-Mons and Binche. A combat

4 Sept. 1944

group was put into action to cut off the enemy.

Between Sombre and Meuse the enemy pushed ahead to the line Beaumont-Philippeville.

In the area of the 1st Army the enemy is testing our lines with tank reconnaissance forces only. Disposition of troops in area Verdun-Etain give rise to the possibility of an attack on Luxemburg and Metz.

Attacks by tanks and guerillas on fortress Le Havre were repulsed.

The 4th Air Force Field Corps gave up bridgehead position near Lyon in order to be able to withdraw safely to the west shore of the Saone. Severe rear guard fighting is going on near Limones and Villefrance.

On 1 Sept. the 11th Armored Division defeated an American regiment in the Ain sector, south of Meximieux by fighting courageously and counterattacking energetically.

It is contemplated establishing a defense line Givry - Chalons - Verdun - Dole.

2. Italian Front:

Only insignificant combat activity along the French border.

In the area of Army Command 14 the enemy is following up our withdrawal movements to the Gothic line.

In the area of Army Command 10 the enemy is continuing his major attack on the Adriatic coast; at least two or three divisions are involved. After several severer attacks, in the course of which the enemy suffered considerable losses, Clemente and likewise Misalo were lost in the late evening hours. Widening of the enemy penetration was prevented by counter-thrusts executed at once.

The intended break-through into the Po Valley was finally stopped after most severe fighting lasting without any interruption for an entire week. This, however, was possible only by shifting all available forces from other front sectors to the left flank of the 10th Army. Reserve forces consisting of the 26th Armored Division and 29th Grenadier Division held in readiness for possible enemy landing in the Adriatic area, also had to be put at the

4 Sept. 1944

disposal of the 10th Army. Since it is expected that the enemy will continue his strong attacks, withdrawal of the 90th Armored Grenadier Division from the West Front was ordered, to prevent an enemy break-through into the Po Valley at any cost.

All troop movements will however be delayed considerably due to destruction of railroad tracks, scarcity of rolling stock, and air raids.

3. Eastern Front:

Southern Ukraine Army Group:

Enemy attacks were repulsed on the Hungarian-Rumanian border as well as in Transylvania.

Northern Ukraine Army Group:

Mopping up of the eastern Slovakian area is progressing successfully against occasional weak enemy resistance.

Our attack southeast of the Lysa Gora Mountains did not achieve any noteworthy success.

Central Army Group:

The enemy is continuing his break-through attempts northeast of Warsaw.

After heavy gunfire the enemy launched an attack on a wide front between the Bug and Ostrolenka and penetrated at several points deep into our main defense line. The attack was supported by tanks at certain key points. The thrust was halted at a line four to six km west of our former main line by counterattacks of local reserves, supported by assault guns, by tanks of the "Panther" and "Tiger" type, and armored brigades.

Northern Army Group:

After most violent gunfire lasting for one hour, strong enemy forces supported by planes attacked north of Modon. The attacks were repulsed. - Two bridgeheads were established over the Eme west of Tartu.

4 Sept. 1944

VII. Chief, Operations Division, Naval Staff.

a. According to information from the Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters, the Fuehrer has ordered the Foreign Office to investigate through an intermediary, if Turkey - in return for submarines to be given to her once their operations in the Black Sea have ended would be willing to grant free passage home to the crews. Check is being made.

b. A radiogram received from Vice Admiral Mirow concerning command relations in fortress area St. Nazaire, was relayed to Commander in Chief, Navy at the Fuehrer Headquarters. However the latter had already departed. The Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters shall in his discussion of this matter with the Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, support the viewpoint of Vice Admiral Mirow. For details see War Diary 5 Sept.

Special Items.

I. West Area.

a. Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff transmitted Fuehrer directive concerning defense of the fortresses Boulogne, Dunkirk, the defense area Calais, the island Walcheren with Flushing, the bridgehead around Antwerp, and the Albert Canal position up to Maastricht. Copy as per 1/Skl 2738/44 Gkdos. Chfs. in War Diary, Special File "Invasion" 4 Sept. 1944.

Naval Staff, Operations Division informed by teletype Group West; Naval Command North; Commanding Admiral, Netherlands; Naval Staff, Nautical Science Branch of the following:

"The Fuehrer has ordered:

Due to the break-through of enemy armored forces in the direction of Antwerp, it is of decisive importance for further combat operations that the fortresses Boulogne and Dunkirk, the defense area Calais, the island Walcheren with port Flushing, the bridgehead around Antwerp, and the Albert Canal position up to Maastricht remain in our hands.

a. For this purpose, the 15th Army Command will see to it that the defense forces of the fortresses Boulogne and Dunkirk and the area Calais are brought up to full strength by assigning additional formations still intact. Likewise the

4 Sept. 1944

resistive power of the fortresses is to be strengthened by increasing the ammunition supply, especially armor piercing ammunition from stocks of the 15th Army Command, by requisitioning all kinds of supplies in the surrounding country, and by relentless evacuation of the population. The commanders of the defense area Calais and the island Walcheren have the power of a fortress commander.

b. The First Parachute Army Command is charged with the defense of the Albert Canal position between Antwerp and Maastricht, and is at the same time put under the command of Army Group B. To accomplish the task it will have at its disposal:

Additional combat groups of Commanding General, Netherlands, training units of the "Waffen SS", the Replacement and Training Regiment of the Army Group, and defense forces of Commanding General, Belgium and Northern France.

c. Commanding General, West will report the strength of the garrisons, of the defense of the Albert Canal position by the 1st Parachute Army Command."

b. The Commander in Chief, Navy sent the following radio-gram to Vice Admiral Kaehler, Sea Commandant of Brittany:

"Dear Kaihler!

I wish to express to you and to your soldiers my special appreciation for the brave conduct exhibited by the naval troops in the defense of the fortress Brest during the major attacks of the past days. I know that you personally and every soldier under your command will do everything to defend the sectors of the fortress assigned to the Navy to the very last, to contest every inch of terrain. Each day which passes without the enemy having access to this important port is a great aid to the hard fighting Army of the West. Fight hard and doggedly and make the story of the defense of the fortress Brest a page of glory in the annals of the Navy.

Heil Hitler!
Doenitz
Grand Admiral"

c. According to a report of Group West, information has been received from the 3rd Air Force that airfield Zellhausen, near Aschaffenburg, is to serve as air supply basis for the Atlantic fortresses and Channel Islands. Three He 111 long-distance transport planes are ready. So far no jettisonable fuel containers are available in spite of urgent appeals by Quartermaster Division, West and his report that lacking containers have been ordered from Quartermaster Division and are on the way. It is requested to support demand for immediate delivery of a sufficient number of jettisonable containers at the aforementioned airfield by way of Armed Forces High Command Naval Staff, Operations

4 Sept. 1944

Division has established as the result of telephone conversations with Quartermaster General, Air Force the following facts:

- aa. the Army will furnish jettisonable containers;
 - bb. a Ju 52 started with containers for Zellhausen on 4 Sept.;
 - cc. more containers are on the way by rail;
 - dd. supply flights will start on the night of 4 Sept.
- d. Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West reported that the 4th Minesweeper Flotilla with ten boats and the 8th Minesweeper Flotilla with twelve boats - the last flotillas of the 2nd Defense Division - are ready for transfer.

Naval Staff, Operations Division ordered reassignment of the 8th Minesweeper Division to Naval Command, Baltic and of 4th Minesweeper Division to Naval Command, Norway. It is suggested that, as far as conditions in the new areas of operations permit, these vessels transferred by Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West retain their flotilla and group status. They should be given Flotilla Commands in view of necessity to foster the tradition of formations, which so gallantly carried out their difficult tasks in the Channel.

II. Baltic Sea.

a. With reference to task "Birke" the Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff transmitted the following:

"The Fuehrer has ordered:

1. 20th Mountain Army Command is to withdraw at once to the Kareluando-Ivalo line ("Birke"). The Commanding General of 20th Mountain Army Command will, during the time of transition, have complete authority over the three branches of the service, Waffen SS, and German organizations outside of the Armed Forces.

2. The following directives are to be used for the execution of the transfer:

This movement must be explained to the Finns and to our troops as a withdrawal of German troops necessitated by Finnish demands. Intention to remain on Finnish soil must become known as late as possible.

4 Sept. 1944

Operations will have to be timed in such a manner that evacuation of dispensable soldiers as well as of supply utilities and goods stored in Bothnian ports is accomplished to the largest extent possible by 15 Sept.

Southern flank of the Army must be protected against attack by the enemy coming from the southern Finnish area by blocking of roads leading in from that area.

Operation "Tanne West" is cancelled.

3. All measures are to be executed in "amicable agreement" with the Finns, but the necessary reserve is in place due to Finnish secession. Finnish support can be accepted, excesses must be avoided.

Enlistment of Finnish volunteers, willing to fight on the German side has to follow these rules: They are to be assigned to the nearest German troops, including Northern Army Group, and to be organized into Finnish volunteer-corps.

4. Sequence of priority with regard to evacuation as far as Bothnian ports are concerned will be arranged by the Commanding General of the 20th Mountain Army Command. The German General and his staff, formerly assigned to the Supreme Command of the Finnish Armed Forces and other suitable German organizations in southern Finland will be placed at his disposal at once for supervision of evacuation and for local negotiations with the Finns whenever necessary. German General to leave Finnish territory after completion of task, at the latest by 15 Sept.

Highest on the priority list is the evacuation of Assault-Gun Brigade 303 from southern Finland, of non-essential-fuel, especially airplane gasoline, and of 5,000 cbm fuel for motor vehicles. In order to reduce the shipping distance the supply will go - in compliance with the directions by Quartermaster General of the Armed Forces Branches - chiefly to Northern Army Group, whose continuous supply (minimum requirements) must not be endangered.

5. For supply of 20th Mountain Army in the new defense areas, the evacuated supplies and those in transit for 9th Mountain Army should be utilized.

Commanding General, Norwegian Theater will assign larger supplies to the area Kareuando - Kautokeino.

4 Sept. 1944

Thus, and by increading oversea shipments, supplies sufficient for a long period of time must be secured for the 20th Mountain Army.

6. Tasks of the Navy and Air Force:

Protection of the evacuation in Baltic Sea and handling of increased supply traffic by way of Norway; increased enemy pressure must be expected.

Preparations of Navy for future seizure of Finnish ships are to be kept. up.

7. 20th Mountain Army Command will report plans and measures taken."

Naval Staff, Operations Division transmits telegram to Naval Command, Baltic Sea; Naval Command, Norway; Admiral, Eastern Baltic; Chief, Naval Liaison Staff, Finland with special emphasis on necessity of camouflaging and utmost secrecy of intentions.

b. Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters is informed by Naval Staff, Operations Division that according to a report by Admiral, Eastern Baltic measures "Schnellabschluss" would immediately reverse public opinion in Finland and endanger our own evacuation measures. Execution therefore only after disadvantageous consequences are out of the question. Reinforcement of "Seeigel" between Tyters Island and the coastal islands, as well as patrol by submarines, are being executed.

c 20th Mountain Army Command informed Naval Staff of directive concerning operation "Birke", according to which withdrawal to the northern area is to begin on 6 Sept. Seizure and destruction of Finnish tonnage in Finnish ports will be ordered separately. Preparations will be made by Naval Staff, Operations Division in agreement with Naval Liaison Officer at 20th Army command. Extensive improvisation will be necessary in the execution.

d. Naval Command, Baltic informed Naval Staff, Operations Division of the following directive to Admiral, Eastern Baltic and Naval Liaison Staff, Finland:

The Gulf of Bothnia must be available as operational area for our sea forces. Execution of operation "Birke", especially evacuation of parts of the 20th Mountain Army Command and supplies, necessitates the opening of the Åland Sea. It is planned to provide a mine-free passage.

4 Sept. 1944

through the Finnish declared area, with full recognition of the Swedish declared area. Based on present directive demanding amiable collaboration with Finns, information must be secured at once whether or not Finns would resist minesweeping in their declared areas (Battery Enskjaer). Speedy confirmation required.

Naval Staff, Operations Division informs the Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters and Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff (Navy) accordingly.

e. Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Quarter-master Division, Chief, Supply and Administration Officer, Section 2, East sent for the sake of information of all political, economic and military chief offices the following message:

"The Finnish Governemnt has demanded that German troops evacuate Finland by 15 Sept. It is the desire of the Armed Forces that on that date all German citizens and German nationals, personnel of the Armed Forces, and considerable quantities of highly valuable supplies have been evacuated by sea from Finland. Finland was asked to support evacuation measures and has promised every support.

Accordingly we must refrain from all measures and orders which could jeopardize the evacuation and change the present friendly relations.

The Chief, Armed Forces High Command orders for the sector of the Armed Forces:

Treatment of Finnish citizens and army personnel will undergo no changes for the present.

No measures of any kind against Finnish citizens and army personnel and Finnish property in Germany are to be taken for the time being. Exceptions to be made solely by order of Chief, Armed Forces High Command.

On account of the changed situation military requests for shipping space needed for the evacuation of German troops from Finland, and thereafter the supply purposes of the Armed Forces in Norway, have priority over all other demands."

f. Naval Liaison Officer at 20th Army Command wired report of the Army Command that Finns seized fuel stored at Helsinki and Turku and refuse delivery. After investigation by Naval Command, Baltic it was stated that such a seizure did not take place. Allegedly only small quantities were available there. Naval Staff, Operations Division ordered Naval Liaison Staff to check the facts and clarify the

4 Sept. 1944

situation and to inform Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff (Navy); Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters; and Naval Staff, Operations Division;

g. Naval Liaison Staff and 20th Army Command reported concerning seizure of Finnish tonnage as follows:

"1. Seizure of Finnish tonnage may be possible till 15 Sept. 1944. This measure would undoubtedly however be regarded as an act of force and would result in corresponding counter-measures on the part of the Finns. This is not desirable in view of the fact that the Finns so far have not obstructed our evacuation.

2. Army Command considers it impossible to shift the German troops to the region south of the Army boundary line by 15 Sept. They would probably be interned and handed over. Therefore forces of Army Command will not be able to hold Finnish ships after 15 Sept. In case of an emergency this could only be done by naval forces."

h. Pointing out the importance of assuring the necessary supply for the Northern Army Group, Naval Staff, Operations Division - on proposal by Naval Command Baltic - requests High Command, Air, Operations Staff to furnish about 60 cbm of fuel for use of minesweeping planes in the Pommeranian Bight.

High Command, Air, Quartermaster General replied on 2 Sept.:

"In view of airplane fuel situation and due to the necessity of carrying out troop transports by air to Northern Army Group, which could not be taken over by the Navy, fuel cannot be furnished for the purpose requested."

Naval Staff, Operations Division has given instruction of Naval Command, Baltic to file a new well substantiated request in case of an unbearable operational situation due to lack of fuel, stating the number of planes available and the extent of the minesweeping tasks demanded by necessity.

III. Chief, Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff submitted the following directive to Chief, Army Equipment and Commander Replacement Training Army, General War Officer, and to Naval Staff, with copy to Army General Staff, Organization Division:

4 Sept. 1944

"The Navy will provide 20,000 men for the formation of fortress troops. The Fuehrer demands that these formations shall be organized immediately (fortress battalions, fortress anti-tank and fortress artillery detachments). Chief, Army Equipment and Commander, Replacement Training Army will arrange for the details in cooperation with High Command, Navy and report plans and time schedule."

Further orders to be issued by Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division Organization and Mobilization Branch and High Command, Navy, Bureau of Naval Administration.

IV. In addition to the regular and detailed reports on the enemy situation which are transmitted by the Naval Intelligence Division to the proper authorities of the Navy (see War Diary, Part D, Vol. VIIa), comprehensive information about the entire situation is given by Naval Staff, Operations Division. Copy as per l/Skl I b 2737/44 Gkdos. Chefs. in War Diary Part B, Vol. V.

Situation 4 Sept.

I. Situation West Area:

1. Enemy Situation:

Nineteen planes of the 19th Group were detected on operations. In the morning a British vessel was located in each of the following: AM 6140, 5160, and 4790. According to radio monitoring convoy movements in the Channel were prevented by bad weather.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

Parts of five enemy division and of French FFI formations were identified near Brest. According to a report by the fortress commander, the entire fortress area was exposed to a heavy gun and mortar shelling on 3 Sept. The enemy airforce executed high - and low flying attacks which also included the peninsula of Crozon and the sector Le-Conquet. The enemy directed his most forceful attacks against the western part of the fortress, but they

4 Sept. 1944

were stopped. Severe losses were suffered on both sides. Penetrations were sealed off.

All enemy attacks against the eastern part of the fortress were repulsed. Command post of Naval Artillery Battalion 262 was encircled according to a report by Naval Shore Commander, Battery "Toulbroch" was taken by the enemy. The Italian Battery Commander was killed in action. The radar station Mengam was destroyed in an air attack. The crew is missing.

The PT boat S "112" remains ready for action; PT boat S "145" will be dismantled, weapons and crew will be put into action in the fortress.

Submarine U "256" departed from Brest during the night of 3 Sept. Naval Harbor, South and West Mole, as well as Dock 8 and 9 were destroyed.

Artillery activity on both sides and lively reconnaissance on our part with repeated contact with the enemy were reported.

Two armed fishing vessels executed transport voyage between Quiberon and Lorient. A submarine leaving La Pallice was escorted.

Land Situation:

No report of position was received from one unit of the three naval regiments which marched from Bordeaux. This unit was commanded by Commander, 2nd Minesweeper Flotilla. The other Navy formations crossed the Loire according to a report by Naval Liaison Officer at 65th Army Corps. Chief Commander, Naval Offices West, Vice Admiral Lindenau, is now at Belfort.

Channel Coast:

According to a report by Admiral, Channel Coast, tank spearheads of the enemy were north of Aalst and 30 km south of Antwerp. Brussels was occupied by the enemy. At 1300 fighting was going on in the southern outskirts of Antwerp. Admiral, Channel Coast transferred to Utrecht.

Camp Hasso near Boulogne, Poperinghe and Zedelghem were evacuated. Roselare is being evacuated. Lumbres has been evacuated as much as possible; Aircraft Recognition School Armentieres has been disbanded.

In agreement with 15th Army command the destruction of all harbors of the Pas de Calais was ordered.

4 Sept. 1944

According to aireport by Naval Shore Commander, Seine-Somme the enemy reached our main defense line on 3 Sept. Demand to surrender was rejected; however it was proposed to permit evacuation of the remaining 50,000 civilians within the next two days. The enemy rejected this proposal and renewed his hostilities which led to a light exchange of gunfire.

Battery "Lindemann" fired seven salvoes on a freighter off the English coast at 1248 on 4 Sept.; no results were observed. At 1415 Dover, Deal, encampments on the English coast and batteries near St. Margaret were shelled by Batteries "Lindemann" and "Todt" in response to enemy shelling. Smoke clouds were observed over Dover. No damage occurred on our side.

Transfer of the flotillas to the east has so far been executed according to plan. The 14th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla distinguished itself especially by not abandoning damaged vessels under the most difficult circumstances. On 4 Sept. seven motor minesweepers ready for action were present in Dunkirk while seven others were not in serviceable condition.

There are 14 motor minesweepers, 13 naval landing craft, one submarine chaser, two drifters, and two armed fishing vessels at Ostend, one trawler and six drifters at Zeebrugge. It is planned to transfer to the east all vessels with the exception of one group of minesweepers at Ostend as soon as possible. The remaining group of motor minesweepers of the 8th Flotilla is supposed to be used for mine protection of PT boats. The Commander of the 2nd Defense Division will command the remaining boats from Zeebrugge and Flushing until the last boat has left the area of the Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West. Staff of 8th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla is planned. Thereupon the boats will be transferred to the Holland area. One convoy was escorted by two PT boats as planned in the Channel Island area between Guernsey and Alderney. Likewise, a convoy, consisting of two harbor defense vessels sailed from Guernsey to Sark and back. In addition to anchorages for decommissioned vessels of the Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West a position for a battery consisting of three 8.8 cm guns has been prepared on Sark. Garrison of the Casquets will be withdrawn to Alderney.

4 Sept. 1944

II. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea.

On the afternoon of 3 Sept. naval anti-aircraft guns on Heligoland shot down one enemy plane which upon crashing on the Duen burst into flames. The explosion caused by the crash destroyed two barracks belonging to naval anti-aircraft personnel and heavily damaged several other buildings. In all probability another plane was shot down. At noon on 4 Sept. naval anti-aircraft guns in Emden shot down one low-flying Mosquito.

Communication with Port Commander Antwerp has been interrupted since 1200. Commanding General Netherlands ordered state of alarm 2 for the entire Holland area. Destruction of the harbor of Antwerp is being continued. Mine-barrage "Walsorden" and "Lilo" alarm mine barrages were laid in the Scheldt.

The transfer of the "Hansa Line" vessels under construction from Helder to Borkum had to be postponed because of damage to the ships. It was planned to convoy the steamers FUESLIER and ESMERALDA eastwards from IJmuiden during the night of 4 Sept. The convoy was attacked by enemy planes at 2247 off IJmuiden apparently without results. The steamer ESMERALDA had to be assisted by a tug at 2350 because of engine trouble. The convoy therefore had to return to Helder.

In the Heligoland Bight convoy tasks were executed between Elbe and Weser as planned. Minesweeping operations were cancelled because of bad weather. Patrol activity was carried out on a reduced scale.

Part of the Staff of the Commander of the PT boats was moved to Sengwarden. Operational command of the PT boats will for the present be stationed at Scheveningen.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Twenty-two planes of the 18th Group were detected in action. From 0055 to 0421 radio traffic, probably from aircraft carriers, was located by station Svanvik in 261° to 263°. At 1113 a British vessel was indistinctly located in AF 76. According to an uncertain bearing another British vessel was presumably an AN 2448 at 1202.

4 Sept. 1944

According to Naval Command, Norway observations in the area of the Bear Islands-Norway since 29 Aug. permit the conclusion of the presence of QP convoys, since a PQ convoy arrived at Murmansk and Archangel on either the 26 or 27 Aug. It is assumed that the attack on the TIRPITZ by carrier-based planes on 29 Aug. served the purpose of keeping her immobilized. The assumption was confirmed by an observation report of a meteorological plane in AF 1660 on 3 Sept. of the sighting of a convoy with carrier, cruiser, and destroyer escort. At present Admiral, Norway does not expect any more danger from carriers in the Arctic Ocean.

Own Situation:

Slight enemy reconnaissance activity was reported in the area of Admiral, Arctic Ocean on 2 and 3 Sept. Eighteen planes flew over the area of Petsamo.

At 1308 on 4 Sept. an enemy submarine attack on a north-bound convoy ten miles southeast of Egersund in the area Admiral, West Coast was unsuccessful. Planes flying singly entered the area of Sognefjord by way of Bergen.

Seventeen ships were convoyed northbound and 40 ships southbound.

III. Skaderrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

1. Enemy Situation:

The enemy formation consisting of 36 boats, reported on 3 Sept. in the Gulf of Finland, turned off to the northeast under cover of smoke screens after being shelled by Army Coastal Batteries 509 and 921. Another formation which was likewise detected followed suit after being shelled by Batteries "Silamae" 1 and 2. Shelling of our batteries by enemy shore batteries was without success.

2. Own Situation:

Admiral Skagerrak:

Sixteen boats were used for minesweeping. At 1920 on 3 Sept. guard of VP 1708 was fired at and wounded in the shipyard of Helsingør. Work in the yard was not resumed on 4 Sept. after the arrest of 17 persons.

4 Sept. 1944

Convoy duties were carried out as planned and without incident.

Western and Central Baltic:

Forty-five boats were on minesweeping duty. Three mines were swept north of Darsser Ort and one in the Pommeranian Bight, another in the Kiel Bay.

The ROBERT LEY ran aground off Swinemuende (Westengrund) at 0630; she was free again at 1500.

Hospital ship BERLIN sailing in convoy was unsuccessfully attacked by four "Boston" planes and three fighters at 1515. northwest of Windau.

Admiral, Eastern Baltic:

The first Finnish soldiers leaving Finland arrived at Admiral, Eastern Baltic and volunteered for service in the Navy.

The destroyer Z "25" took the Finnish steamer NAJADEN as prize at 0500 on 4 Sept. in AO 2972 (northwest of Dagoe). The ship was released after unloading of eight tanks, trucks, and coal cargo.

A large gap was torn in the net barrage south of buoy 32; repair is being made with great speed. Troop transports took place according to plan and without incident.

On 3 Sept. the Northern Army Group received 1029 tons of supplies at Riga, and 3717 tons of supplies as well as 878 motor vehicles and guns at Reval.

Naval Liaison Officer "Hogland" reported that Finnish evacuation is slowing up.

Naval Liaison Officer received an order from Naval Command, Baltic Sea to remain on the island with his personnel.

IV. Submarine Warfare.

In the West Area submarine U "281" left La Pallice for operations in the Atlantic. She is to return to Norway.

4 Sept. 1944

In the Arctic Ocean submarine U "956" carried out her mine-laying operations in the Barent Sea. Four submarines were used for patrol off Narwa in the Gulf of Finland.

In the Mediterranean submarine U "407" arrived at Salamis. No reports from the Black Sea.

V. Aerial Warfare.

West Area:

Daylight attacks were made by 260 enemy planes, 200 of which attacked in the area of the Scheldt estuary. Sixty enemy planes executed low-flying attacks in the area of Maastricht.

During the night of 4 Sept. no enemy air activity was reported in the West area.

Reich Territory:

During the day, enemy planes flew over several areas in Reich territory, attacking railroad stations and locks as well as anti-aircraft positions. One fighter formation entered the Trier area by way of Luxemburg without undertaking attacks.

Twenty to 30 Mosquitoes attacked Karlsruhe during the night of 4 Sept.

Mediterranean Theater :

On 3 Sept. 1100 enemy planes with fighter escort entered the Belgrade area by way of the Adriatic Sea. Three airfields, one oil refinery, and the bridges over the Danube and Save were attacked. On the airfields 22 planes were destroyed, 13 damaged. The bridge over the Danube near Belgrade was destroyed. Otherwise enemy activity was limited to the usual areas.

On 4 Sept. our planes made reconnaissance flights over the Tyrrhenian Sea.

4 Sept. 1944

Eastern Front:

On the eastern front 378 German and 1145 enemy planes were on operations; three planes were lost and 32 shot down.

In the course of the enemy air attack on the hospital ship BERLIN west of Liepaja five of our fighters shot down nine enemy planes.

On 3 Sept. Kola Bay was reconnoitred from the southern tip of Murmansk up to Grasnaya. The following ships were observed: one large destroyer on slips, two (presumably) escort boats, thirteen freighters, two repair ships, two coastal tankers, one coastal freighter under construction and five coastal freighters in tow.

VI. Warfare in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

1. Area of German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

At 0730 38 freighters and one tanker escorted by four corvettes passed the Strait of Gibraltar making for the east. During the night of 3 Sept. one group of steamers was located 15 miles south of Sestri Levante, another 32 miles south of Nice. Patrol activity was also reported in the waters of Nice - Mentone at 0500. Early on 4 Sept. air reconnaissance detected three westbound destroyers south of Toulon and two medium size and two small freighters at Livorno. Enemy patrol activity off Nice - Mentone continued during the day.

Own Situation:

During the night of 2 Sept. a convoy of naval landing craft sailing from Spezia to Genoa was bombed without success. During the night of 3 Sept. a convoy consisting of open sailing boats sailing from Genoa to Sestri Levante was attacked from the air with bombs and rockets; no damage was caused. One plane was shot down.

Reports of fighter bombers attacks on Savona and Sestri Levante during the night of 3 Sept. were received. One motor coaster sank at Sestri Levante.

4 Sept. 1944

At 1300 on 4 Sept. the port of Genoa was heavily bombed by successive waves of planes; heavy ship losses were inflicted. A detailed report has not yet been received.

During the night of 3 Sept. convoy and patrol activity off the Italian west coast as planned. Naval Signal Station Cape Martin was moved to the rear as the result of our withdrawal.

2. Navy Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

At 1330 on 3 Sept. a light cruiser was shelled by the 15cm Battery Rimini. After an observed hit the cruiser turned off to the south under cover of a smoke screen. Beginning at 1500 of 4 Sept. the port area and Battery Rimini are being shelled again from the sea. All day and night Rimini was attacked by planes with bombs and gunfire without much success. Measures for destruction, mining, and evacuation of radar station were ordered.

Operation on Brac was carried out according to plan. Tasks for the day were accomplished. During the night of 2 Sept. the 7th PT Boat Flotilla sank one motor sailing vessel and one sailing smack. Rifle and mortar fire from the shore was returned and silenced.

The landing on the west coast of Brac intended for the evening of 4 Sept. under protection of 7th PT Boat Flotilla was already started on the morning of 4 Sept. Contact with the enemy has not been reported so far. Mining of the shore area of Cattolica was executed as planned.

Minelaying operation "Feh 3" and "Nutria" with minelaying vessel "Kiebitz", one submarine chaser and two motor mine-sweepers is planned for the night of 4 Sept.

The PT boat S "155" was heavily damaged and put out of action by a movable crane which toppled over.

b. Aegean Sea:

One submarine was observed in the forenoon north of Bali Bay, another in the afternoon north of Cape Stafros (Crete). Another submarine was in Turkish territorial waters.

Sabotage on Salamis was prevented by quick action.

4 Sept. 1944

In the course of operation "Neopolis" directed against querillas (Naval Shore Commander, Peloponnesos), 27 of their motor sailing vessels and several small vessels were destroyed.

c. Black Sea:

No reports from the Black Sea, Bulgaria, and Rumania.

According to a monitored radiogram Admiral, Black Sea is assembling all available forces in the quarters occupied by the Naval Communications Officers and in the Luettjens Barracks at Sofia. There are about 1100 to 1200 men. Section Commander of Naval Communications Officers Quarters is Captian Remmler; of Luettjens Barracks, Captain Grattenauer.

Danube Situation:

During the night of 2 Sept. two gun-carriers were involved in a gun battle near Bazias. The enemy used anti-aircraft weapons, anti-tank cannon and machine guns.

According to a report by Inspectorate of Mine Sweeping, Danube, Army troops and the Zieb Combat Group have started their advance upstream toward Prahovo.

Group South ordered bringing through as many vessels and cargoes as possible and in case this could not be done putting the crews in action ashore.

Air Force Command, Southwest was asked to search for Group Sea Transport Braila.

Dropping of mines and losses through mines are not reported. Three mines were swept at km 1458.

According to declarations made by escape interneers vessels of Sea Transport Braila were scuttled by their own crews.

On the forenoon of 2 Sept. the ammunition train bringing supplies to Combat Group Provoho blew up as a result of a bomb hit.

4 Sept. 1944

VII. Situation East Asia.

The following brief summary covering the second half of August is based on reports received:

Japanese Homeland:

On 20 and 21 Aug. air raids were carried out against different localities on Kyushu and Shikoku. Damage resulting therefrom was slight. The Japanese report that 23 planes out of a total of 80 which took part in the attack were shot down. According to the Japanese the raids were carried out by the 20th US Bomber Command which consists of four wings with altogether about 120 planes some of which are B 29's. The chief air bases of the Americans are at Calcutta and Chengtu. From there the raids were carried out without an intermediate landing.

Tactical execution: Flight in small groups of five planes at the most; attack in waves.

Marianas:

Fighting on Tinian and Guam was still observed from Rota on 19 Aug. There is no longer any contact with Japanese troops there. The situation of the Marianas is considered very serious. Rota and Pagan were attacked by American bombers on 19, 24, and 25 Aug. No reports came in about the state of the battle on Rota.

Bonin Islands:

Iwo Jima was raided on 19, 25 and 27 and 30 Aug. No report was received about damage inflicted.

Southwest Pacific:

Enemy air raids against the Japanese island bases were continued. The following places were attacked: Halmahera six times, Serang three times, Ambonia four times, Truk two times, Nauru five times, the Japanese Military installation on the Marshall Islands five times, the Milli Atoll four times, Yap five times, Palau three times and Timor and Motje one time each. Air raids on the shipping route between the Moluccas and Philippines were continued.

On 10 Aug. the Americans attempted another landing on Bougainville. According to Japanese press reports the last remnants of the American troops landed there were annihilated on 20 Aug. in violent counter-attacks.

4 Sept. 1944

The enemy supremacy in the air over the waters of New Guinea, the Moluccas, and the Philippines makes it very difficult to supply Japanese forces stationed there. This is preparatory for an attack American forces will launch from New Guinea in the direction of the Chinese coast.

New Guinea:

The 2nd Japanese Army has been surrounded in a wide circle according to an American report. The air blockade is supposed to make it impossible to deliver further supplies.

On 19 Aug. 14 small vessels were sunk by the enemy air force near Manokwari.

Violent fighting is going on near Sansapor.

Contrary to earlier reports scattered Japanese forces are still holding on to positions on the island of Biak according to an American report. They were attacked by American ground forces on 18 Aug.

Loss of ships:

According to an American press report which so far has not been confirmed by the Japanese, the U.S. Air Force sank the following ships: one cruiser east of Hongkong, one destroyer and 20 medium size and small freighters in the area of the China Sea and along the Japanese supply lines to the southern area.

According to a Reuter report Allied submarines sank one convoy vessel, one large tanker, fourteen medium size and two small freighters. The exact dates of these successes were not given.

Indian Ocean:

On 24 Aug. an Allied task force including two or three aircraft carriers and 50 planes attacked Padang and Emma Harbor. Japanese confirmation of medium heavy damage inflicted has not yet been received.

Kuriles:

Paramushir was attacked by enemy bombers on 24 and 30 Aug. The extent of damage caused was not reported.

CONFIDENTIAL

4 Sept. 1944

Burma:

The Japanese continued their withdrawal. According to an American report the Allies reached the Chindwin River. In an interview in Londong Lord Mountbatten gave the casualties on the Indian front as follows:

Allies: 10,000 killed, 3,000 missing 27,000 wounded
Japan: about 42,000 killed.

China:

The Japanese advance along the North South Railroad is being continued. At present violent fighting is going on between Chungking troops and Japanese forces near Leryang, southeast of Hengyang. Combat activity was flaring up again in the Honan area.

CONFIDENTIAL

5 Sept. 1944

Items of Political Importance.

The new Bulgarian Prime Minister Muravieff declared among other things that unconditional neutrality should be maintained, that the Tripartite Pact was no longer in force, and that the anti-Comintern Pact would be renounced. The Government would approve all measures suitable to bring about peace with Great Britain and the U.S.A. It is, however, most important to establish cordial relations with Russia.

At 2000 a Moscow broadcast announced Russia's declaration of war against Bulgaria and the fact that Russian troops had entered Bulgaria.

According to DNB the expected announcement of the Portuguese Government about breaking off relations with Japan has not yet been made. Allegedly the Japanese have submitted proposals for settlement of Timor differences.

Hostilities between Finland and Russia ceased the morning of 1 Sept. According to an official report by the Finnish press the Finnish Foreign Minister handed a note to the German Ambassador in the evening of 2 Sept. containing the resolutions of the Parliament that relations with Germany be broken off and that German troops must be withdrawn by 15 Sept.

Conference on the Situation with the Commander in Chief, Navy at 1120

I. Chief, Bureau of Naval Administration reports that 20,000 naval soldiers will be ready to be taken over by the Army on 7 Sept. The wish that formations be retained, at least on the company level, will be respected by the Army if at all possible.

II. Chief, Naval Intelligence Division: A report of the Reich Security Central Office is received in which it is stated that according to information in the possession of the Swedish Embassy in London which has become known, British and American troops intend to land in the Trieste-Fiume area between 3 and 7 Sept. They are to advance from there in the direction of Marburg/Drau. At the same time the Vienna basin is to be occupied by strong airborne troops in order to prevent the advance of Russian forces into this area.

5 Sept. 1944

A report is made dealing with the organization, warfare, and activity of enemy airforces in the western and southern areas based on the evaluation of the enemy situation made by the Air Force, Operations Staff, Foreign Affairs Section on 5 Sept. Extracts were brought to the attention of the highest staff officers of the Navy by Naval Staff, Naval Intelligence Division. Copy as per l/Skl 27464/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part D, Volume 8a.

Likewise a resume of the evaluation of the enemy situation by Army General Staff, Foreign Armies West of 3 Sept. was brought to the attention of the Front War Staffs. Copy as per l/Skl 27438/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part D, Volume 8a. In regard to the Balkans it reads:

"The political struggle going on between Soviet Russia and England in the Balkans is becoming more and more acute with every day. Due to the quick penetration of Rumania by the Russians and the strong Russian influence in Bulgaria, England is endeavoring to strengthen her political position in Greece by supporting National Greek claims for the return of Thrace. However, the Soviet influence in Greece is already so strong - due to the EAM Movement and the inclusion of some Communist members in the Greek Government - that consideration of Soviet demands must be reckoned with. In any case, Greece cannot be viewed any longer as an exclusive British sphere of interest. The British on their part are trying to strengthen the National Greek Movement which is opposed to the EAM by granting special support to the EDES Movement.

In the Yugoslav area an agreement between Tito and Churchill seems to have been reached about operational plans, resulting in further supply of Tito with arms. Official dropping of the anti-Communist DM Movement by the British shows that they do not consider themselves strong enough to invite Russia's open opposition. How cautious British policy of preventing a conflict with Russia over the Balkans is, can be judged by the fact that so far no major military operation has been started there by the British. It can be assumed that in the expected major operations against the Dalmatian-Istrian coast, only Slavic forces will participate.

America is exercising greatest restraint in matters concerning the Balkans and obviously endeavoring not to become involved in a conflict with the Soviets. The intervention of Donovan for the purpose of persuading Mihailovic to drop his anti-Bolshevist attitude and to induce him to fight the common enemy first, namely Germany, may well be judged in this light. Furthermore, the U.S.A. would be in no position whatsoever to support an anti-Bolshevist policy in the Balkan countries by taking possession of some regions

5 Sept. 1944

there, since the necessary forces needed for such an action are not available in the Mediterranean area.

In conclusion it can be said about the situation in the Balkan countries that the Soviet influence is growing constantly, that Great Britain is attempting to prevent losing her position by supporting nationalistic and even some communistic forces, while the U.S.A., not having any particular major interests of her own in the Balkans, is endeavoring to prevent all possibilities of a conflict in favor of a common front against Germany."

Conference Limited to a Restricted Circle.

III. Army Situation:

1. Western Front:

Since the inner flanks of the 15th and 5th Panzer Army are being defended by scattered forces only, they were again penetrated by strong British forces and torn wide open. Enemy tanks entered Antwerp by way of Brussels and thereby closed the circle around the 15th Army, which is likewise hard pressed in its center. The enemy's intention is to cross the Albert Canal and reach Breda.

Parts of the 15th Army will retreat fighting their way into the fortresses Boulogne, Dunkirk and Calais; a stronger force, with the Army Staff, will withdraw to the east in the direction of Breda by way of Flushing, while one division by-passing Brussels to the north will escape in the direction of Diest.

Tank forces of the enemy are pressing toward Louvain and Wavre. The enemy also succeeded in establishing bridgeheads over the Meuse near Dinant and south of Givet. Tank reconnaissance is pushing towards Ciney.

In the sector of the 1st Army, the 3rd American Army with special concentration in the area of Charleville-Montmedy continues its pursuit and is testing our Moselle bridgeheads. A major attack must be expected soon.

In the sector of the 19th Army Command the troops are taking up defense positions along the line Givry-Chalons-Verdun. The Rhone and Saone bridges from Lyon to Macon were destroyed.

5 Sept. 1944

2. Italian Front:

Western Front:

In the entire area no infantry combat of any importance took place. However very strong enemy air activity was primarily directed against the Po - and Tessin-bridge and railroad centers.

Southern Front:

Enemy pressure between Florence and the west coast is increasing constantly. Further increasing offensive activity must be expected.

Along the Adriatic coast the enemy again tried to force a breakthrough into the Po Valley in an unrelenting onslaught, supported by uninterrupted participation of the airforce, by strong artillery and ships units as well as by newly assigned tank forces. The intention of the enemy was again foiled by the bravery of our troops exhibited in the course of the bitter struggle.

3. Eastern Front:

Army Group Southern Ukraine:

Fighting in Transylvania continues in flux. Our own forces are insufficient against the reinforced enemy.

Army Group Northern Ukraine:

In Slovakia our own operations are making satisfactory progress in the area surrounding Presov, Magendruessel and near Poprad. Southeast of the Lysa Gora, own attacks improved our position.

Central Army Group:

On account of losses suffered the enemy has not yet renewed his attacks northeast of Warsaw. North of the Bug the Soviets continued their break-through attempts to the Narew with superior forces on a wide front. Strong tank forces broke through our position north of the Bug and pushed ahead to the west by way of Vysskov. Further to the north the enemy reached the Narew. Likewise south of Ostrolenka the enemy succeeded in making deep penetrations. The withdrawal of the front line, broken in several places, to the Narew is taking place. 77 enemy tanks were destroyed.

5 Sept. 1944

Army Group North:

Between Lake Virts and Tartu the enemy is continuously attacking our Embach bridgehead and has achieved one penetration.

Our attack against the northern part of the enemy bridgehead near Tartu made progress in spite of dogged enemy resistance. East of Tartu our attack advanced only slightly due to strong enemy resistance. Diverting enemy attacks northeast of Tartu were repulsed.

IV. Admiral, Small Battle Units: Commander Hartmann was put in charge of operations of battle flotillas in the southern area. 50 "Molche" were stopped at Verone and diverted to the Adriatic coast. A second "Molch" group consisting of 60 boats will be ready on 10 Sept. As operations for "Linsen" Flotilla 212 with 45 boats in area Calais-Boulogne are no longer possible, transfer to the south has been ordered; its overland transportation is to begin in the area Antwerp and Muenchen-Gladbach. The Flotilla met enemy tank spearheads near Mecheln and suffered losses. 20 "Kommandolinsen" and 30 "Ladungslinsen" arrived at Mecheln, from where they will be transported by rail to the Adriatic coast. The next "Linsen" Flotilla will be ready on 10 Sept. Difficulties in regard to motor installations must still be overcome.

60 "Marder" arrived at Skagen. No dates have been set for "Biber" and "Molch". Decision about action of "Linsen" is to be made on 10 Sept. On this date 12 "Hechte" will also be ready, which will be put into action either at Venice or in the Danish area. Decision will be based on the existing situation.

V. Naval Staff, Operations Division, Chief of Operations Branch

a. Realizing that the Channel fortresses must be defended as long as possible, Naval Staff directed an inquiry to Naval Shore Commander, Pas de Calais, asking for his opinion of the personalities of the fortress commanders of Boulogne, Calais, and Dunkirk.

Vice Admiral Mirow as Commander of Naval Base St. Nazaire reported: "The present command set-up which distinguishes between the Division Commander, who at the same time is commander of the armed forces in the outer defenses of the

5 Sept. 1944

fortress, and the commander of the fortress proper, has already resulted in frictions and difficulties. Upon withdrawal of the 265th Infantry Division into the fortress area I should foresee serious danger for a clear and determined combat command. It would be regrettable if the fortress commander appointed by the Fuehrer were restricted and hindered in his power to command in case the fortress proper is being besieged. The basis of confidence between Navy and Fortress Commander absolutely exists. Clarification of relations must energetically be demanded before start of the siege by the Navy which provides the major and by far the most valuable part of the fortress garrison and all basic materials. The commanders including the Commander of the 7th Submarine Flotilla and Dockyard Commander concur in this opinion."

Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters was asked for clarification with Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff in compliance with the proposal submitted by Vice Admiral Mirow.

According to a report by Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, (Navy), the Armed Forces High Command is considering the appointment of Vice Admiral Mirow as fortress commander because the present fortress commander and commander of the 265th Infantry Division is looked upon as not suitable for the position. This was, however, not the intention of Vice Admiral Mirow who, on his part, considers the fortress commander very capable. The Commander in Chief, Navy, agrees that Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters should receive instructions to approach the Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff once more, to make a decision in keeping with the original proposal made by Mirow.

b. The 1st Task Force reported that work in caisson on the TIRPITZ has progressed to the point that underwater work on the ship could probably be commenced on 6 Sept. In view of the critical political and military situation a decision is requested if repair should be started. This would put the ship out of commission for two or three weeks. However without this repair, going astern with the starboard shaft would not be possible. Besides the leakage safety of the ship would be restricted to the level of the compartments filled with water as that part of the ship would be floating only on the armor bulkhead. 1st Task Force proposes that the work be started. Naval Command Norway supports this proposal.

Naval Staff, Operations Division has ascertained that repair could be interrupted at any time by slipping the caisson. But the ship would then be limited to a speed up to 21 knots. Likewise all the disadvantages would remain which existed before starting the repair.

5 Sept. 1944

The Commander in Chief, Navy approved the proposal made by Naval Staff to postpone work on the TIRPITZ for the time being. Naval Command, Norway, 1st Task Force, and Fleet will receive appropriate instructions.

c. Concerning Finland: The Naval Liaison Staff reports that the Commander in Chief, Finnish Navy has agreed that a mine-swept passage through the Finnish declared area be made (see War Diary 4 Sept.).

Withdrawal of Naval Liaison Officer and radar location station on Hogland is part of the evacuation of southern Finland. Yesterday the Armed Forces High Command decided that execution of operation "Tanne West" be called off. No decision about operation "Tanne Ost" has yet been made. According to Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters execution of operation "Tanne West" will solely concern the Navy. Decision concerning Naval Liaison Officer Hogland would be withing the jurisdiction of the Navy.

In regard to Hogland the Finns are evacuating their arms from the island since they are supposed to turn the island over to the Russians. It would be worth considering whether execution of operation "Tanne Ost" would not interfere with the preparations for evacuation. However the prerequisite remains that a fully equipped army battalion must be available. At an earlier date the Naval Liaison Officer reported favorably about the behavior of the Finnish Island Commander, who declared that he would not oppose a German occupation with the bulk of his troops, especially not if he retains the position of Island Commander and if German units arriving for reinforcement would temporarily be put under his command. Naval Staff will ascertain through Naval Command Baltic Sea whether this feeling still prevails under present conditions. In any case it would be advantageous if the Commander could at least be induced not to remove any more arms and equipment and to abstain from demolitions on the island.

The Commander in Chief, Navy will once more submit to the Fuehrer proposals concerning Hogland.

d. About 5000 wounded soldiers are at Brest. Evacuation on board of a hospital ship would be best. Naval Staff has requested the Foreign Office to make inquiries whether or not the British would permit a hospital ship to enter and leave Brest. The Quartermaster Division is checking what hospital ship could be used.

e. Commander, PT-boats reported that, after operations in the Netherlands area are brought to an end, four PT-boat Flotillas of 28 boats would become available for area Naval Command, North and four PT boat flotillas consisting of 29

5 Sept. 1944

boats for Naval Command, Baltic Sea. The Commander, PT boats intends distribution in the North Area as follows:

- 10th PT Boat Flotilla with eight boats, Borkum
- 2nd and 9th PT Boat Flotilla with six boats, Heligoland
- 8th PT Boat Flotilla, Esbjerg.

A supply and maintenance base is needed for Borkum in the area Emden, for Heligoland in the area Wilhelmshaven and for Esbjerg in the area Cuxhaven.

At the disposal of Naval Command, Baltic Sea are 2nd PT Boat Flotilla with eight boats, 4th PT Boat Flotilla with eight boats, 5th PT Boat Flotilla with seven boats and 6th PT Boat Flotilla with six boats. Of these the 5th PT Boat Flotilla is already in the Gulf of Finland.

Commander in Chief, Navy does not consider it necessary to make a decision until future developments do not permit use of the boats along the Dutch coast. For the present the Scheldt estuary is an extraordinarily important operational area of considerable strategic importance. The Commander in Chief, Navy agrees that Commander, PT Boats be at once placed under the command of Naval Command, North for operational purposes.

The following directive is sent to Naval Command, North, Baltic Sea, Norway and to Commander, PT Boats with copy to Fleet:

"A Commander, PT Boats is at once placed under the command of Naval Command, North for operational purposes. Tasks of the Western Area Flotilla from bases in the area of Naval Command, North remain the same, i.e. offensive operations against enemy convoys along the English coast and against enemy supply traffic in the invasion area.

B. Changes in the distribution of forces as mentioned by Commander, PT Boats (Gkdos. 221/Fl Cgefs. 5 Sept.) are not contemplated at present. In view of possible developments, the Commander, PT Boats is requested to answer the following questions:

1. Is it possible to execute tasks according to A. from the Heligoland Bight?
2. Are offensive operations against the Scottish coast possible from Norway?
3. What are the possibilities of operations in the Polar Region to combat enemy forces hindering our own convoy traffic in the Petsamo - Verdoe area?

5 Sept. 1944

C. In case of enemy landings in Jutland/Southern Norway, or in West or Central Norway, all considerations and orders which are parts of operation "Wallenstein" and - under given circumstances - of operations "Hanna" and Falk'e" are in force. The only addition is that bases be prepared in the Heligoland Bight and in the Skagerrak area capable of accommodating up to four flotillas each.

In preparing the bases, questions raised under B 1 and 2 should receive utmost consideration. Group West has likewise been notified that Commander, PT-Boats has been put under the Command of Naval Staff, North."

Special Items.

I. Naval Armaments was informed by Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division that the "Dackel" (Manned torpedoes Tr.N.) operation in the West Area is completed. Therefore "Dackel" are to be evacuated from the Netherlands. Use of these torpedoes in the Jutland area is to be considered. Torpedo Ordnance Department should store 100 "Dackel" and equipment for setting up of a torpedo regulating station near Kolding, to secure quick transport to areas threatened by enemy landings on short notice.

II. Concerning Baltic Sea.

a. The High Command, Swedish Navy inquired by way of Naval Attache Stockholm whether special measures would have to be taken in regard to "Route 51" in order to facilitate the extensive ferry traffic between Trelleborg and Sassnitz in connection with the exchange of prisoners of war. Upon request the Swedish Navy is willing to sweep "Route 51" up to point "Caesar" before the trips start.

Naval Staff charged Naval Attache, Stockholm to inform High Command, Swedish Navy that the Naval Staff appreciated the declared willingness; however it is felt that no special measures are essential for the prescribed route.

b. Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Shipping and Transport Branch informed Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters, Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Naval Command, Baltic

5 Sept. 1944

Sea, and Naval Staff that evacuation of the 563rd Grenadier Division in strength of 6,505 men, 1,460 horses, and 1,038 vehicles took place between 2 to 5 Sept. Delay was caused by bad weather and the late arrival of the troops.

c. Naval Liaison Officer at the Army General Staff reported in regard to communication sent by Naval Staff, Operations Division on 2 Sept. concerning Baltic Islands that the Chief, Army General Staff was informed of the opinion held by Naval Staff. He was in full agreement and emphasized again that the Baltic Islands and Kurland with Riga will under all circumstances be defended in case of unfavorable development of the situation. Appropriate measures for occupation of the islands have been taken.

d. It is gathered from a report of Admiral, Eastern Baltic to Naval Command, Baltic Sea that, as far as the success of the occupation of the Baltic Islands is concerned, the development on land will decide the issue. The Army intends to transport three battalions, twelve 7.65 cm and five 12.2 cm guns to Oesel Island with naval ferry barges of the 13th Special Duties Flotilla and urges transfer of Battalion 772 with the aid of tugs to the west coast of Estonia. Admiral, Eastern Baltic reports that the impression prevails that the Army would defend the Riga bridgehead to the very end and withdraw to the Baltic Islands after abandonment of the Estonian coast.

e. According to instructions by Naval Command, Baltic Sea, Naval Staff relayed to High Command, Air, Operations Staff the request for immediate formation of an operational squadron and familiarizing of the crews with their task through Naval Command, Baltic Sea in case of operation "Birke". Naval Staff offered the following proposals for consideration:

aa. operational airfield in the East Prussian area (Pillau)
bb. operational command not to be in the hands of the 5th Air Force, which is not acquainted with the area, but of the 1st Air Force,

cc. not to use a squadron of the Replenishing Group (Sea), (at present in Copenhagen) for operations but to make use of squadrons 1 and 3 of Sea Reconnaissance Wing 125, the of which has already arrived at List. In the opinion of the Naval Staff a squadron experienced in combat should be assembled at once.

Finally it is requested that the appointed squadron commander be sent to Naval Command, Baltic Sea for briefing."

5 Sept. 1944

f. The Fuehrer ordered that matters be simplified as much as possible for Finnish soldiers who volunteer for service in the German Army. In this connection the Finns could be told the Fuehrer would never consent to a rape of Finland.

Naval Staff informs Naval Command, Baltic Sea; Admiral, Eastern Baltic; and Naval Liaison Staff Finland accordingly with special emphasis on full use of transport facilities when defense forces are transferred from Finnish to Baltic ports.

III. Concerning Balkans.

a. Group South reports on the political situation in the Balkans as follows:

"1. Bulgaria:

According to situation report by Admiral, Black Sea, the present cabinet Muravieff, which in spite of its leaning toward the left does not have Bolshevist tendencies, must be considered transitional. The Prime Minister will demand removal of all obstacles which stand in the way of neutrality, especially evacuation of German troops under threat of breaking off diplomatic relations. Further the declaration will repudiate the Tripartite Pact and announce the recall of Bulgarian troops at present serving outside her borders. Finally allegiance to the Free Nations will be pledged, especially to Russia. So far there has been no deterioration of the situation. Evacuation of German arms by air is being continued. The regency is supposed to have instructed the Bulgarian Armed Forces not to resist the invading Russians. So far only one Russian bridgehead on the southern bank of the Danube near Tutrakan was confirmed.

2. Greece:

According to several agent reports, ELAS bands on the Peloponesos are breaking up into purely communistic units which do not acknowledge the Papandreu government, and into moderate units obedient to the government. Unconfirmed reports come in from several sources about concentration of British forces in Turkish Thrace for a push on Salonika.

3. Serbia:

Rioting and demonstrations are taking place in Belgrade, presumably in anticipation of special events on 6 Sept.,

5 Sept. 1944

the birthday of King Peter. Other sources give as the reason the commencement of enemy action against Istria."

b. Group South informs Naval Staff of instructions issued to Admiral Adriatic Sea on the basis of directives given by Naval Staff on 3 Sept. concerning warfare in the Adriatic Sea area.

For the information of the Naval Staff, Operations Division, the Group adds that the submarine base Pola is extremely endangered by the withdrawal of the present defense line. The Group asks whether the base is still of great value and whether additional defense measures should be taken, which of course would have to be made at the expense of areas situated further to the rear.

c. On 31 Aug. the Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff issued a directive concerning territorial reorganization in the area Southeast. Therefore orders were given that for the sake of proper coordination of all forces and for the purpose of securing a uniform command, the Military Commander, Southeast will be under the direct command of the Commanding General, Southeast. Likewise the Military Commander, Greece will be put under the command of the Commanding General, Army Group E.

d. The Armed Forces High Command agreed to the intention of Commanding General, Southeast that the Fortress Infantry Battalions stationed along the Peloponnesian coast should only be withdrawn to the extended bridgehead defense Corinthia after a strong enemy group is present in the Attica area and all preparations for blocking are completed. Demolition of all military installations is of special importance. High Command, Air, and the High Command, Navy were requested to instruct Air Force Command, Southeast and Navy Group, South to support necessary transfers to the mainland by putting to use all sea and air transport facilities according to directions by Commanding General, Southeast.

e. Naval Staff relayed the following directive of Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff to Group South and Admiral, Aegean Sea: "Dispersals of garrisons on Aegean and Ionian islands to be carried out by making full use of all resources according to demands by Army Group E as long as fuel stores on the islands and the continent suffice for this purpose."

f. On the basis of monitored radiograms of Admiral, Aegean Sea, to Group South (Leander Report), Naval Staff informs Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters; the Army High Command, Army General Staff; Military Liaison Officer, Navy; Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy; High Command,

5 Sept. 1944

Air, Operations Staff; and Chief of Operations Branch, Naval Staff concerning dispersals in Aegean Islands as follows:

"A. Re-groupings:

1. Dispersal in western Greece has started according to plan. Command is in the hands of Naval Shore Commander in conjunction with 22nd Alpine Army Corps and 68th Army Corps. Abandoning of Patras and Missolonghi is contemplated to take place after evacuation of Ionian islands. Command post of Naval Shore Commander will then be at Ioannina.

2. Crete: The island is to be transformed into a fortress which will have as its eastern boundary Almyros Bay 2412 East. Withdrawal of the entire 22nd Infantry Division has been ordered; likewise demolition of all built-in guns and abandoning of all stations in the eastern part. Naval artillery personnel which thus becomes available is to be used either for replenishing or manning of the main defense line.

3. Dispersal on the Dodecanese Islands - Rhodes, Leros and Samos - was ordered by the Army.

4. Northern Aegean Sea: Withdrawal of German troops from Thrace has begun. Simultaneous evacuation of Mytilene and Chios has been ordered.

B. Sea Transports:

The Navy has so far fulfilled all demands made by the Army. Delays are occurring in regard to the removal of equipment from islands since the Army only reluctantly obeys the dispersal orders, especially in the case of Crete. This results in loss of time and poor use of tonnage. Railway traffic to Salonika is congested and is being attacked by partisans. Therefore extensive use has to be made of sea transportation. Some "Siebel" ferries are transporting aircraft gasoline from the island, B 4 * to be furnished by the Air Force. All serviceable naval landing craft are taking part in the evacuation of the Peloponnesus; later on all transporters now plying to Crete will join.

C. Air Transports:

Every night about 80-100 flights by Ju and Do 24 planes are taking place, two thirds of them to Crete and one third to the Dodecanese Islands. On the average 15 men, baggage, and light and heavy B. 4: type of aviation full, Tr.N.

5 Sept. 1944

infantry arms are transported on each plane. So far everything is coming off as planned; enemy countermeasures are unexpectedly light.

D. Submarine Situation:

Numerous submarines were sighted off Candia. One of our own submarines is chasing submarines in this area and generally annoying the enemy; at the same time she is on duty against landing operations of surface forces."

According to continuous verifications by High Command, Navy, Bureau of Naval Administration, the total losses of the Navy from August 1939 to July 1944 amount to:

33,565 (1,902) dead,
17,253 (887) missing,
7,958 (447) prisoner of war and internees.

(The numbers in parentheses refer to officers).

38.7% of the losses were sustained in the North Atlantic, 11.9% in the Mediterranean, and 8.4% each in the waters off the coasts of the occupied West Areas, respectively at sea in the course of the Eastern Campaign.

The compilation is being made by the Bureau of Naval Administration as to calendar and war year, as to theaters of operation as well as to months of each calendar year.

Situation 5 Sept.

I. Situation West Area.

1. Enemy Situation:

Fifty planes of the 19th Group were detected on missions; two British vessels were located in AM and one in AL.

2. Own Situation:

Area Atlantic Coast:

Search by PT-boat S "112" for the missing Demolition

5 Sept. 1944.

Detachment of Ouessant was without success. The boat was shelled from the shore.

The Naval Shore Commander, Bretagne has the intention of rescuing the crew of strong point Audierne by PT-boat. Transfer of PTb-boat S "112" to Channel Islands is planned.

During the night of 3 Sept. evacuation of the wounded from Le Conquet to Brest was executed by three armed fishing vessels.

Guns of Battery 5/803 in Brest were put out of action. The crew was incorporated into infantry units.

In the afternoon of 5 Sept. heavy artillery fire was directed against Battery GRAFF SPEE near Brest. At the same time all batteries were continuously attacked by four-engined enemy bombers. One 15 cm gun of Battery Portzic and the main command post at Cameret were put out of action. The naval harbor, moles, and quays of Brest were demolished according to plan. East of the fortress our main defense line was shortened again.

According to an unconfirmed report the Command Post of Naval Artillery Battalion 262 was occupied by the enemy in the afternoon of 4 Sept.

So far 4,000 men of seagoing formations and naval offices were put into action in the foreground defense of the fortress Brest.

Gironde Fortresses:

The ammunition dump Jonzac was overpowered by superior forces after two days of fighting. During the night of 4 Sept. supply by air of the Gironde fortresses did not take place because of ground conditions. Attempts will be renewed during the night of 5 Sept.

Ground Situation:

According to a report by Naval Liaison Officer, 64th Army Corps, mechanized parts of naval units have crossed the Loire and reached Dijon. Marching columns have reached the northern part and center of Lucy. Possible whereabouts of non-mechanized naval regiments (12th Submarine Flotilla, Arsenal Bordeaux, Anti-Aircraft Artillery School, etc.) are not known. Our forces are engaged in violent fighting with terrorists.

5 Sept. 1944

According to a report by Group West, the Army Group G will issue an order that naval specialists should not be used for defense purposes but returned home. Into this category belong: submarine crews, experienced sailors, radio operators, radar operators, teaching personnel of the Anti-Aircraft /Artillery School and anti-aircraft artillery specialists.

Reception center for retreating sea-experienced personnel will be at Heuberg under command of Rear Admiral Breuning, for other personnel at Muensingen under command of Vice Admiral Scheurlen.

Channel Coast:

Encirclement of the 15th Army was completed when the enemy entered Antwerp. The Army was ordered that parts of its forces should attempt a break-through between Brussels and Antwerp, other parts should try to escape by way of Flushing in the direction of Breda. Forces unfit for the break-through should reinforce the fortresses Boulogne and Dunkirk as well as the defense sector Calais. According to a report by Naval Shore Command Pas de Calais, the harbors of Zeebrugge and Ostend could still be used by small vessels for supplying the encircled Army.

The Fuehrer has ordered that the Defense Sector Calais must be held. The Commander of that Defense Sector has the same authority and duties as a fortress commander. Valuable works of art are to be removed from Bruges to Zeebrugge and to be transferred from there by mine-sweeping boats.

At 0830 Battery "Grosser Kurfuerst" fired four salvos at tank spearheads 15km southeast of Boulogne and at 1400 at tank spearheads at Souverin - Moulin. At 1530 Battery "Grosser Kurfuerst" shelled the road crossing Soucer.

At 1149 Battery 3/1254 near Cape de la Heve fired at a monitor at a range of 20 to 25 km without observing results. The monitor, in turn, unsuccessfully shelled our coast.

On 3 Sept. the outer harbor Boulogne was closed by 24 anti-submarine mines and 22 explosive floats. The 1st Radar Detachment was transferred with all soldiers and equipment to Fehmarn and Utrecht.

An enemy spearhead of about 50 tanks was repulsed on the northern front of Le Havre. Anti-aircraft batteries and certain objectives inside of the fortress were under enemy surprise fire. Our artillery successfully combated.

5 Sept. 1944

tanks and enemy artillery. On our side two 8.8 cm anti-aircraft guns, one 7.5 cm anti-tank gun and one field gun were put out of action.

On 4 Sept. from 1339 to 1905 the Battery "Barfleur" was under continuous enemy fire. A field ammunition dump of 500 rounds of 10.5 cm and 9,000 rounds of 2 cm ammunition exploded as a result of a direct hit. Enemy surprise fire on battery "Blevilde" did not cause any losses. So far the enemy has shelled the fortress only with light guns.

Naval Reserve Companies 60 and 65 blew up the abandoned "Biber" and torpedoes after supporting "Biber" operations at Fecamp on 29 Aug. They were transferred to Gent. Later transfer to Schoten near Antwerp took place on 3 Sept.

II North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

Patrol activities in the Heligoland Bight had to be reduced due to stormy weather; off the Dutch coast the patrol positions were not manned. Convoy duties in the Heligoland Bight between the estuaries and up to Esbjerg were carried out. The escort steamer FUESILIER sailed from Helder to Borkum as planned.

The 7th Minesweeper Flotilla laid barrage "SWKA II" off the Dutch coast. At 1355 an unsuccessful air attack by 21 enemy planes took place on boats of the 15th PT Boat Flotilla in the Mervede Canal in South Holland.

According to an eyewitness report by sergeant of the Port Command Office Antwerp, the Port Commander was killed in action on 4 Sept. at 1600 in an engagement with terrorists and a British infantry spearhead near the Scheldt Canal. The Royer Lock was blown up according to the same report. Heavy explosions took place in every section of the harbor. Tank installations in the Oil Harbor and the street bridge across the Albert Canal, east of the Asia Dock were blown up by the Army. Mine barrages blocking the harbor were laid. The ferry pontoon on the Steen was blown up. The naval clothing store was destroyed by fire; the naval and army food depots were looted by terrorists. Naval Command reported that, as far as it is known, our troops are still at the Albert Canal and fighting is still going on in Antwerp. Ferries are being provided for evacuation of army troops across the Westerscheldt.

5 Sept. 1944

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Twenty planes of the 18th Group and two planes in the Iceland area were detected.

At 1735 a British vessel was located by Svanvik in 257°, at 1923 an American vessel in 316°.

According to a rough evaluation of air reconnaissance in the Kola Bay in all eleven "Liberty" freighters of 77,000 BRT and one "Liberty" freighter of 7,000 BRT in drydock could be discerned.

Own Situation:

On 3 Sept. a light exchange of fire was reported from the area of Petsamo.

Fifteen ships northbound and 26 ships southbound were escorted.

III. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea:

1. Enemy Situation:

According to a reliable agent's report of 4 Sept., traffic between Lysekil and England has not been resumed so far. Goods ready for transport are still in storage in Goeteborg and Lysekil; some, however, have in the meantime been moved by planes.

On 4 Sept. three minesweeper units and 29 war vessels and their command posts - in wireless communication with one another - were located by radio interception in the Gulf of Finland.

In the forenoon of 5 Sept. four boats were off Hungerburg sailing on a northwesterly course. Several observers reported that 18 small vessels were on minesweeping operations southwest of Tyters Island.

2. Own Situation:

Admiral Skagerrak

Seventeen boats were engaged in minesweeping. Because of weather conditions a coastal mine type "A" operation could not be started again.

5 Sept. 1944

Work in the shipyards of Helsingor has not yet been resumed.

Western and Central Baltic Sea:

Forty-two ships were engaged in minesweeping operations. Three mines were cleared in the Pomeranian Bay and one south of Hela.

Cancelling previous orders, Naval Command, Baltic Sea has put one heavy cruiser and two torpedo boats on a three hour alert upon request of the Commander of the 2nd Combat Group; the remaining fleet forces were put on a six hour alert. PT-boats are continuing their training. The first Training Division carried out exercises as planned.

Admiral, Eastern Baltic Sea:

The barrage patrol in the Gulf of Finland had to be with-drawn on account of weather conditions. Transfer of the 563rd Infantry Division was completed. Likewise all other transports were carried out as planned and without incident.

On 4 Sept. 1,985 tons of supply were transported to Reval for Army Group, North.

Minesweeping operations in the Gulf of Riga were continued according to plan.

Setting up of a 3,8 cm battery was started in Varnia on Lake Peipus.

On 3 Sept. four patrol boats were engaged in supporting an attack of the Army, south of the mouth of the Ema River; they fought enemy batteries effectively and were able to support our crossing of the Ema River.

IV. Submarine Warfare.

No reports of any significance came in from the Atlantic.

In the Arctic Ocean, submarine U "968" completed the mine task in the Barents Sea. Submarine U "394" has not reported since 2 Sept. Her loss was presumably caused by a night air raid.

The submarines U "19", "20" and "23" in the Black Sea report that they could remain at sea till 11 Sept. after having equally distributed supplies and fuel. Both periscopes of

5 Sept. 1944

submarine U "19" were disabled.

No reports of any significance were received from the Gulf of Finland and the Mediterranean.

V. Aerial Warfare.

1. West Area:

The enemy carried out strong reconnaissance and fighter-bomber activities over the entire area. In southern France 50 to 60 twin-engined planes attacked transport objectives in the area northeast of Lyon up to the Dijon area. During the night of 5 Sept. reports were received about ten enemy planes in the Dutch area, and about an attack on an airfield there.

2. Reich Territory:

During the day 50 to 60 enemy fighters flew over the Osnabrueck - Muenster - Bielefeld area without attacking. Eight fighters advanced into the area of Wittenberg. Small fighter formations continuously were in the area of Aachen-Wiesbaden - Frankfurt - Main - Daiserslautern - Luxemburg and Schweinfurt. Low-flying attacks were made on airfields and transport objectives. About 1,000 bombers with fighter escort entered southwest Germany from Belgium and attacked transport and industrial objectives as well as airfields, primarily in Ludwigshafen, Mannheim, Karlsruhe, Stuttgart and Speyer. For particulars see daily situation.

About 400 bombers with fighter escort entered Hungary from the south and attacked transport objectives in the area of Budapest - Szolnok as well as in the area of Szob and Sombor.

150 of our fighters were engaged in defense; however they were unable to contact the enemy.

During the night of 5 Sept. 20 enemy planes flying singly were reported over North and West Germany; they dropped a few bombs. 30 Mosquitoes attacked Hanover.

3. Mediterranean Theater:

On 4 Sept. about 1,365 enemy planes were on missions over the entire area of North Italy. Attacks were carried out over the front sector near the Adriatic Sea, against the main transport line between Milau-Rimini, against the town

5 Sept. 1944

and harbor of Genoa, and in the area of Trient. The shipyards in the harbor of Genoa were heavily damaged. Six patrol boats, two submarine chasers, three submarines, six gun carriers, and one tug were sunk in the harbor.

All other activity was on the usual scale.

East Area:

On 4 Sept. 406 own and 2,154 enemy flights were reported on the eastern front. Two of our planes were lost and 32 enemy planes were shot down.

VI. Warfare in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

1. Area of German Naval Command Italy:

Enemy Situation:

No reports from the Gibraltar area were received. In the afternoon of 4 Sept. ten enemy vessels were sighted from the shore, nine miles south of Nice. Shortly before midnight of 4 Sept. a tanker and five merchant ships were observed by air reconnaissance twelve miles southeast of Toulon. In the afternoon of 5 Sept. several enemy vessels were located by radar instruments on different courses in the waters southeast of Nice. At 1704 four destroyer and five small war vessels were on southwesterly course 23 miles southwest of San Remo.

In the morning at 0728 four minesweeping boats were reported on easterly course 20 miles north-northwest of Cape Corso obviously engaged in mine clearance.

Four destroyers, two escort boats, five torpedo boats, fifteen small war vessels, three LST's, nine LCT's, six LCI's, 25 small landing boats, two transporters, one tanker, nine freighters, etc. were present in Ajaccio according to a rough evaluation of air reconnaissance. It is obvious that Ajaccio serves as a supply and transit harbor.

In the morning of 5 Sept. one motor gunboat, three torpedo boats and one floating refueling vessel were observed by air reconnaissance in Bastia. Two torpedo boats were 20 miles southeast of Bastia on southerly course.

5 Sept. 1944

In the night of 4 Sept. the enemy carried out brisk reconnaissance and night fighter-bomber activity in the Gulf of Genoa. A convoy consisting of naval landing craft and open sailing vessels on its way from Porto Fino to Spezia was attacked without result.

Own Situation:

Supplementary to the report on the air attack on Genoa it was learned that the attack on 4 Sept. was carried out by 120 to 150 four-engined bombers dropping bomb carpets. Altogether 600 to 800 of the heaviest bombs were dropped. The defense by heavy and medium anti-aircraft artillery presumably brought down two planes. A complete loss were: the torpedo boats TA "28", and "33", one submarine chaser, one minesweeping boat, three patrol boats, three torpedo carriers, and one transport submarine; heavily damaged were: four submarine chasers, two war freighters, and one transport submarine. Many casualties were suffered. More than 100 Navy men were killed. The attack was aimed at submarines according to radio interception.

In an air attack on a convoy sailing from Genoa to San Remo with motor minesweeper escort, one open sailing vessel was damaged and had to be beached. Otherwise escort and defense tasks were carried out as planned.

2. Area of Navy Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

In the evening of 4 Sept. harbor and town of Ravenna were attacked by enemy planes. A detonation took place in the ammunition supply dump. The steamer PROMETHEUS was attacked with rockets and bombs off Albona by two fighter-bombers and received five hits in the steampipe system. The engine remained intact, the rudder was put out of order.

On the evening of 5 Sept. the Army ordered a second degree alarm when an army station reported a ship formation 25 miles southwest of Pola. Immediate readiness was ordered for naval forces in Trieste and for the 22nd and 24th PT-boat Flotillas. Two submarine chasers made a sweep as far as southwest of Rovigno. The measure was cancelled about midnight when it was established that report was based on false location.

The mine operations "Feh 3" and "Nutria" were called off in the early hours of 5 Sept. because of drifting mines. While escorting the minelayer formation the motor minesweeper R "12" struck a mine at 0525 and sank. The execution of this

5 Sept. 1944

operation was postponed until the night of 5 Sept.

Sixty more coastal mines type "A" were planted six miles east-southeast of Caorle by two "Siebel" ferries.

The coast guard vessel KS "20" burnt and sank after an engine explosion.

b. Aegean Sea:

At 0800 on 4 Sept. the convoy "GK 06" was shelled from ashore by partisans while transporting troops from Kythera and was damaged slightly.

Transport movements in western Greece in connection with operation task "Thunfisch" were completed on 4 Sept. 3,061 men, 49 horses, 226 tons of equipment, 11 guns, 24 "HRH", 14 passenger automobiles and other were transported by sea. Furthermore the Battalion 1005 was transferred from Argostoli to Missolonghi. The Naval Shore Command, Western Greece was highly praised by the Army for the excellent execution of this operation.

c. Black Sea:

No reports were received from the Black Sea and Rumania. Evacuation by air of German ordnance depots is being continued.

3. Danube Situation:

Nothing is known about Combat Group Prahovo. Rear Admiral Zieb is intending to block the Danube below Prahovo by sinking all ships unfit to continue with the journey.

Group South informs Naval Staff of an order to Admiral Zieb and Inspector of Minesweeping Danube according to which the breakthrough through the rapids must soon be made, thus bringing the operation, in collaboration with the Army, to a successful end. Further delay could endanger the total success.

5 Sept. 1944

VII. Situation Far East:

The Naval Attache Tokyo reports:

"1. The Japanese Admiralty Staff, gravely concerned about developments in Europe and about their own situation in the Pacific, has lately raised again and again the question about a possible understanding between Germany and Russia. The situation has undergone basic changes. Tension between the Allies is increasing according to reports received. Russia is said to be convinced of a future clash with America-Great Britain and does no longer desire complete destruction of Germany. On the contrary Russia is greatly interested in preserving Germany's military strength, her productive capacity and her food supply. A prolonged bitter struggle in the west causing further weakening of the Anglo-Americans would be absolutely to her liking. Germany is no longer a danger to Russia, since no government could think of, nor would be able to start another offensive against Russia. Russia's present offensive against the Balkans is said to serve the purpose of bringing Germany to terms by cutting off her oil supply, etc. The question is whether Germany is going to disregard Russia as usual. Japan is prepared to bring about negotiations.

2. In my answer I emphasized my incompetence in political affairs. As a purely personal opinion I however thought it permissible to say that Germany has no intention of submitting proposals to Russia, but that if such proposals would be made by Russia, they would no doubt receive serious consideration by Germany, provided that they deserve discussion at all. This information was given in agreement with the Ambassador who in the meantime has also reported this step taken by the Japanese Navy to the Foreign Office.

3. In that connection I was informed by the Japanese that the question how Russia could be induced to make offers on her part has become a matter of serious consideration by government offices.

4. The initiative obviously rests with the Japanese Navy. The Ambassador is being kept informed."

6 Sept. 1944

Items of Political Importance.

According to Reuter the Russian declaration of war on Bulgaria is looked upon as a realistic approach to the situation. Bulgaria would have to sign an unconditional surrender. Russia would now be represented in Cairo besides Great Britain and the U.S.A. According to an Exchange report, the Bulgarian armistice delegation will now have to depart from Cairo without having accomplished its objective. A further swing to the Communist side will be the result in Bulgaria. The impression prevails that the Russian step was taken in agreement with the Bulgarian Communists, in order to frustrate at the last moment the subjection of this country to the influence of the Anglo-Americans.

The Rumanian Government broke off relations with Hungary according to Radio Ankara.

A new Churchill-Roosevelt meeting is in the offing, presumably in Quebec.

It may be assumed that cabinet changes will occur in Portugal and Slovakia.

The Allied Supreme Command has started to send out radio directives to foreign laborers employed in Germany. At present the laborers are instructed to leave their factories whenever the occasion permits such an action.

Conference on the Situation with the Commander in Chief, Navy at 1115.

I. Naval Staff, Operations Division, Chief of Operations Branch:

a. Admiral, Aegean Sea, uses the code-word "Leander" for evacuation of southern Greece and dispersal of troops on the Ionic and Aegean islands.

The commanding General, Army Group E intends to evacuate all islands and to transfer the personnel to the continent in the following order: Crete (the western part of the island is to be transformed into a fortress-like position); Dodecanese in progress; Mytilene, Chios as speedily as possible; Cyclades last. A few isolated communication centers are already being transferred. The success will depend on countermeasures taken by the enemy. Air and sea transport will remain restricted to combat men and valuable equipment. Naval batteries and isolated groups will be evacuated last in order to feign continued occupation.

6 Sept. 1944

Personnel on the Peloponnesos will be put at the disposal of the 41st Infantry Division. The batteries will be destroyed. Blowing up of the harbor of Navarino failed because of faulty fuses. Evacuation of Kalamate will probably be completed by 5 Sept. The PT-boat base was destroyed with all equipment. The Coastal Defense Flotilla is being transferred to Monemvasia.

b. The Commander of the Fleet intends to go to Copenhagen,

c. Preparations for destruction of bridges across the Kiel Canal will have to be made.

d. Naval bases in border areas are to be kept supplied. Danzig is an Army fortress. Naval Command, Baltic Sea requests inclusion of Gdynia and Pillau into the fortress area. Inquiries about the development of the western bases, Wilhelmshaven and Emden, will be completed this week. Amount of supply will depend on the state of completion.

II. Naval Staff, Special Weapons Division reports about activity of five "Marder" (manned torpedoes, Tr.N.) in the waters of Mentone. Four of them were lost. The fifth one fired at a destroyer but missed.

III. Naval Staff, Chief of Naval Intelligence Division: Bulgaria has asked Russia for peace according to a report by the Foreign Office. The severing of diplomatic relations between Germany and Bulgaria can be expected at any moment.

Group South gave information about the political situation in Bulgaria. Political developments appear to have led to the overthrow of the cabinet Muravieff. Unconfirmed reports from Greece speak of a concentration of British forces in Turkish Thrace for a push on Salonika. In this connection attention is called to information from Fuehrer Headquarters received in the evening of 5 Sept. According to it the Russians are advancing with strong forces towards the Danube south of Bucharest. Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters received in the evening of 5 Sept. According to it the Russians are advancing with strong forces towards the Danube south of Bucharest. Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters mentions the suspicion that the Russians are planning a quick advance to the Aegean Sea and to the Dardanelles, to get there ahead of the Anglo-Americans. "Intensification of political conflicts between the Allies is being expected as the result of this step."

6 Sept. 1944

Conference in a Restricted Circle:

IV. Army Situation:

1. Western Front:

Enemy Situation:

The hardest fighting of the 21st British Army Group is still centered on the eastern flank. The purpose is to force a quick advance through the Netherlands to prevent the withdrawal of German troops to the east. The two armies of the 12th American Army Group appear to be ready for a push to the Rhine on a broad front. The enemy command appears to aim at reaching the Doubs Valley as speedily as possible with troops of the 7th American Army, thus blocking the retreat of the German troops withdrawing from southern France.

Own Situation:

Parts of the 15th Army were able to cross the Peninsula Walcheren. Withdrawal movements to the line Lumbres-Armentieres were carried out as planned without much enemy pressure.

Strong enemy tank concentrations take place in Antwerp. The enemy is trying to repair the blown-up bridges under cover of fire. The "SS" Netherlands was ordered into action for blocking the pass near Woensdrecht. A weak defense front was set up at the Albert Canal.

Our defenses were penetrated between Gembloux and Namur; the latter was taken by enemy tanks. East of Charleville and Sedan our forces were pushed back further.

At the bridgehead Metz and outside of Pont a Mousson enemy attacks were repulsed.

Our operations in the area Dijon-Chalons-Besancon are carried out as planned.

2. Italian Front:

On the western front the enemy considerably intensified his activities. Enemy attacks made yesterday against the main passes were for the first time uniformly carried out and permit the conclusion that the enemy is being reinforced on this front.

On the Adriatic coast the enemy continued his breakthrough attempts which were supported by heavy tank artillery

6 Sept. 1944

and fighter-bomber formations. All attacks were repulsed. In places where the enemy had been able to score local penetrations he was compelled to retreat as the result of counterthrusts carried out energetically. Our defensive struggle was again a complete success owing to the excellent fighting spirit of our troops.

3. Eastern Front:

Army Group Southern Ukraine:

While the attack of the Hungarian 2nd Army across the Hungarian-Rumanian border gained considerable ground, the enemy attacked in many places of the Carpathian front in Transylvania with larger forces than on the previous days and achieved several deep penetrations.

Army Group, Northern Ukraine, Center and North:

Our combat groups in Eastern Slovakia are engaged in fighting with reinforced partisan forces west of Bardiov, east of Presov, in Soisska Nova Ves and Mikulas.

The heaviest fighting is still raging on the Narew. The situation is getting tense. South of Ostenburg the Russians were able to cross the Narew ahead of our troops. Our counterattacks were able to gain territory only inch by inch. The enemy also crossed the Narew south of Rojan. In the course of our counterattacks the enemy gained the upper hand and forced our troops to withdraw to beyond their starting places.

Further north near Pozan the enemy likewise pushed through to the Narew and split our bridgehead. As a result of it the east shore of the Narew had to be abandoned.

The enemy assembled strong forces in front of our bridgehead Ostrolenka. Attacks were repulsed.

In connection with the situation at Antwerp the Commander in Chief, Navy emphasized the special importance of the Scheldt line. The island Walcheren is the pivot of the Holland area and the defense fort of the Scheldt. Blocking of the Scheldt is at present the most urgent task. The Commander in Chief, Navy orders Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters to point out the importance of Walcheren to the Fuehrer prior to the conference on the situation.

6 Sept. 1944

The Chief, Naval Staff talked by telephone with the Commander Naval Command, North about the same subject. In addition the following telegram was sent to Naval Command, North and for information to Group West; Admiral Netherlands; Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy; and Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters:

"Naval Staff calls attention to the special importance of the island Walcheren as pivot of the Holland area and as defense fort of the Scheldt.

Full use of additional mining of the Scheldt and blocking by scuttling of ships must be made. Report intentions.

Special Items.

I. Area of Naval Command North.

a. In the eventuality that the coast of the North Sea becomes an area of operations, the Fuehrer on 24 Aug. charged the Commissar for the Defense of the Reich with the duties of a Reich Commissioner for Defense for this area of operations. At the same time he is authorized to instigate immediately all measures necessary for the defense of this territory.

b. On 5 Sept. the Commanding Admiral, Naval Command North issued an order concerning field and fortress constructions along the North Sea coast and submitted same for information. Copy as per l/Skl 27794/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Volume X.

II. Eastern Baltic.

a. Concerning Evacuation of Finland:

Naval Command Baltic issued the following order:

"The Army is very much interested in a smooth evacuation, since, among other things, most valuable goods have to be removed. The Finns have promised full support. Accordingly all measures and orders must be avoided which could disturb and change the present cordial relations. The Commander in Chief, Armed Forces High Command issued the following orders to all members of the Armed Forces: Treatment of Finnish nationals and members of the Army will not undergo any changes for the time being: no measures are

6 Sept. 1944

to be taken against citizens and members of the Army, and against Finnish property in Germany for the present unless ordered by the Commander in Chief, Armed Forces High Command.

Naval Staff, Operations Division submitted the following directive of Armed Forces High Command, Operation Staff, Quartermaster Division to Naval Command, Baltic; Naval Liaison Staff, Finland; 9th Defense Division, with copy to Naval Command, Norway and Admiral, Arctic Ocean:

"1. German military equipment, installations and supplies, whose evacuation cannot be accomplished by troops or by sea transport, are to be destroyed. Basic principle to be followed: German supply goods must not fall into Russian or Finnish hands.

2. With regard to the withdrawal of the 20th Mountain Army Command, any kind of destruction and blocking measure is permitted which is suitable for preventing effective pursuit on the part of the enemy. The special importance of the Oulu-Rovaniemi-Salla railroad line is emphasized."

b. Concerning Operation Tanne Ost:

Admiral, Eastern Baltic reports:

"1. Naval Liaison Officer reported:

a. Officers and soldiers are in a very gloomy mood. 7.5 cm anti-aircraft artillery, ammunition, small arms, and drilling machines are ready for removal in the harbor. Island Commander said that the Finns could not hold the island any longer. It can be gathered from several statements that the island would be abandoned in about a week.

b. The defensive force is still very strong. At present it consists of 120 officers, 2,000 men; 5% on leave; water sufficient; in case more than 2,000 men are stationed there, they will have to be billeted in tents.

c. Island Commander is still as friendly to the Germans as before. His family has been in Sweden for six weeks. It is difficult to influence the Commander emotionally. It is not known how much hope there is to create the basis for an endurable peace by a conscientious execution of orders. An attempt to stop the disarming might expose our intentions and cause resistance.

2. Valve has agreed to the reappointment of a Naval Liaison Officer and the establishment of a wireless-group as observation post for missing Finnish reports from the northeastern part of the Gulf of Finland. The Naval Liaison

6 Sept. 1944

Officer will return on 6 Sept. It is doubtful whether the consent would have been given if the serious intentions of evacuation had been known.

3. It is the opinion of the Naval Liaison Officer that it would be advantageous to have Kurivarnell informed about the landing by a superior officer. Report beforehand, whether present opinion is still valid."

Naval Staff, Operations Division sent the following telegram to Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters, Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff Navy and for information to Army General Staff, Naval Operation Communications Officer.

a. Admiral, Eastern Baltic wires to Naval Staff and the Northern Army Group:

"1 Naval Liaison Officer on Hogland reports that the Finns are evacuating arms.

2. From 1. the suspicion arises that arms are being turned over to the Russians. Then the key to the Gulf of Finland would be in the hands of the enemy. Tyters Island becomes unimportant and endangered.

3. Interference with the evacuation is most opportune now. The consequences resulting therefrom with regard to the attitude of Finland must be weighed against value of key position of Hogland.

4. Immediate occupation is only possible with trained Army battalions. At the same time Naval units should be moved in."

b. Political considerations do not exist at present (theoretically till 15 Sept.)

c. Opinion of Naval Staff as to the value of Hogland presupposes that the waters north from there will be at the disposal of the enemy; see 1/Skl I North 2387/44 Gkdos. Chfs. of 9 Aug. (will be relayed to the Army General Staff separately). Hereto the following supplement:

1. An attempt has been made by Naval Command Baltic to influence the Finns to postpone removal of the arms for the present. The success is doubtful according to reports received today.
2. The importance of Hogland as a key position according to c. is only conditional.
3. No naval forces are at present available for operation "Tanne Ost."

6 Sept. 1944

4. It is necessary that the island is not surrendered to the Russians without a struggle, which should be put up as soon as conditions permit. Even if the limited value of the island is realized, as well-timed renewal of operation "Tanne Ost" appears desirable. For this it is essential that forces be held in readiness. Permission should be obtained from the Fuehrer."

c. Concerning Sea Transport for Army Group North:

Naval Liaison Officer attached to Army General Staff reports that the Army General Staff desired information from Naval Staff in case of necessary evacuation of the entire Army Group North by sea at short notice. Such a situation could arise if the enemy interrupts ground communications with Durland or if it becomes necessary to withdraw the forces of Army Group North for the purpose of reinforcing the front at some other place. The Army General Staff needs information about the number of transports needed and their capacity, the time required and ports of embarkation. Naval Liaison Officer remarks that at present the matter is only of a theoretical and preparatory character.

Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Shipping and Transport Branch is chiefly concerned with this matter.

III. Concerning West Area.

a. Naval Staff, Naval Intelligence Division informs Naval Command North and Admiral, Netherlands about a British broadcast transmitting instructions by General Eisenhower to the inhabitants of Rotterdam. These instructions request all harbor and railroad personnel to hold themselves in readiness near their present working place. Employers and workers are asked to protect industrial installations, railroad cars, vehicles, cranes, public transport installations, and fire fighting installations against destruction by the Germans.

Mining of the harbor and harbor installations is to be observed carefully and to be sketched. Likewise the installation of booby traps which will be set off by switches or by opening of doors and windows, is to be watched closely and to be reported to the entering Allied troops.

CONFIDENTIAL

6 Sept. 1944

b. As to command in the fortress area of St. Nazaire, the Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, in accordance with the suggestion of Naval Staff, decides as follows:

"Major General Huenten is the commander of the fortress St. Nazaire being appointed for this special task by the Fuehrer. The commanders and officers of all branches of the service in the fortress and its outlying defenses are under his command, even if they have seniority in years of service."

c. Naval Staff gives the following directive to Commanding Admiral, North Sea, Admiral, Netherlands with copy to Naval Command, North:

"If the enemy advances deeper into the Holland area, all ships blockaded there will be lost. Therefore greater risks than before must be taken in returning the ships to home ports. Return of ships must not be made dependent on air escort, which cannot be counted upon. Report intentions."

IV. The proposal submitted by Naval Staff, suggesting the mining of the Danube by Air Force Command, Southeast is answered by High Command, Air, Operations Staff that, according to a check-up made by the Chief, Operations Branch, this task cannot be carried out due to the lack of gasoline. For the same reason the Air Force had to stop all combat activities.

Naval Staff, Operations Division informed Group South and Inspectorate of Minesweeping Danube accordingly.

V. According to information from Naval Staff, Quartermaster General the question came up at the armament conference on 6 Sept. whether the fleet construction program 1943 should be adhered to under present conditions, or whether changes are essential. Naval staff, Quartermaster General will investigate the matter.

CONFIDENTIAL

6 Sept. 1944

VI. List of Submarines, 1 Sept. 1944

In service on 1 Aug. 1944:

427 boats

Newly put into service:

Type VIIC 5

" IXC 1

" XXI 5

" XXIII 4

15 boats

in all

442 boats

Taken out of service:

3

Losses: Operations Zones

33

At Home

0

36 boats

406 boats

In service on 1 Sept. :

In addition:

6 foreign boats.

Of the 33 losses 22 occurred in the Atlantic and Indian Ocean, five in the Mediterranean Sea, three in the Northern Waters and three in the Black Sea.

Of the 406 submarines in service, 149 were in action, 161 on trial runs and 96 used for the training of crews on 1 Sept.

The 149 submarines in action are distributed as follows:

Atlantic 88, Mediterranean 3, Northern Waters 26, Group Center 12, Torpedo Supply 2, Black Sea 3, and Gulf of Finland 15.

Situation 6 Sept. 1944.

I. Situation West Area:

1. Enemy Situation:

Thirty-nine planes of the 19th Group were detected on missions. Six British vessels were located in the rendezvous area.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast:

6 Sept. 1944

Brest:

On 5 Sept. air raids lasting for several hours were carried out by twin and four-engined planes against the town, fortress, and battery positions. Damage and casualties could not yet be ascertained because of extensive breakdown of communication lines. The traffic in the town is greatly impaired due to bomb craters. Single objectives in the fortress area were continuously attacked by fighter bombers. In the morning of 6 Sept. lively enemy air activity with fighter-bombers was directed against the entire fortress as well as against the Crozon Peninsula and the Le Conquet sector. From 0800 to 1100 the entire fortress area was heavily bombed. A forceful enemy attack supported by artillery barrages, by tank and air forces in the eastern sector of the fortress was repulsed. A penetration in the Le Conquet sector was sealed off. A demand to surrender with the threat that, if rejected, the eastern part of the fortress would be subjected to a violent artillery barrage was answered by artillery fire.

Three armed fishing vessels sailed for Le Conquet and returned transporting wounded soldiers.

It is contemplated for the night of 6 Sept. to send two planes with supplies.

La Rochelle:

A minesweeping ship succeeded in replenishing the potato supply by making a trip to La Trébe. On 4 Sept. the remaining garrison of Noirmoutier arrived consisting of nine officers, 86 petty officers, and 256 men; eight 7.5 field cannons, five 4.7 cm anti-tank guns, two 4 cm, nine 2 cm, 21 heavy, and five light machine guns were also evacuated.

La Pallice:

Beginning 9 Sept. submarine convoys off La Pallice will no longer be carried out. All vessels in the La Rochelle area, with the exception of one minesweeper group for control of the island passages, will be put out of service. The Commander of the 4th Defense Division will form a naval regiment of 900 flotilla crew men and 300 men of the 3rd Submarine Flotilla.

No reports of significance have been received from Lorient, St. Nazaire, and the Gironde fortresses.

6 Sept. 1944

Ground Situation:

The 6th Defense Flctilla with 500 men and the Naval Artillery Battalion 625 arrived at Besancon. Vice Admiral Scheurlen was again named Commanding Admiral, Coastal Defenses, Heligoland Bight. The command for the intercepting command Muensingen was given to Captain (Navy) Vahl.

The former 1st Staff Officer, Navy, of Group West was put in charge of the directing center Belfort. The 3rd and 4th Defense Divisions will continue for the present with a smaller staff and will be commanded directly by Group West, to which the former 1st Staff Officer of Commanding Admiral, Defenses West will be assigned as 1st Staff Officer, Navy. Admiral, Channel Coast will for the time being remain in Groningen to complete fortress and intercepting tasks.

Channel Coast:

The radar sets along the Channel coast were blown up with the exception of the sets at Calais, Dunkirk, Fort Dedunes and Ostend.

By order of the Commanding General, West the harbors Ostend and Zeebrugge are to be destroyed completely without regard to supply by small vessels. Naval coast artillery, and anti-aircraft artillery units are to be included into the Army and should bring along as many arms as possible. Rotating Army coast artillery guns in the Ostend-Zeebrugge area shall participate in ground combat as long as possible and shall only be blown up at the very last minute. Batteries which can be made mobile to some degree are to be placed at the disposal of Army Command 15 for mobile combat.

In the night of 4 Sept. the batteries "Lindemann" and "Todt" shelled an enemy convoy by bearings. Observations were not possible due to smoke screens. Battery "Todt" was unsuccessfully shelled by the enemy long range batteries and in turn shelled the town and harbor of Dover. On 6 Sept. at 1030 tank concentrations were shelled by artillery on Cape Gris Nez. In the afternoon the battery "Friedrich August" was under light enemy artillery fire from the east. Besides, fighter-bombers attacked continuously. The Varnebank lightship placed there by the British in the night of 5 Sept. was destroyed by artillery fire.

On 5 Sept. from 1800 to 2000 Le Havre was attacked by 600 to 800 four-engined enemy bombers concentrating on this harbor and southern part of the town. At the same time the anti-aircraft batteries were shelled by artillery. Three harbor

6 Sept. 1944

patrol boats and one tug sank in the harbor; several vessels were heavily damaged. One shelter was pierced.

Two 7.5 cm, one 2.5 cm anti-tank guns, four machine guns, several board weapons and considerable quantities of ammunition were annihilated. The southwestern part of the town is very much destroyed and ravaged by large fire. Two planes were presumably brought down. Final blocking of the harbor is being continued. On 6 Sept. slight artillery fire exchange took place along the land front. Enemy infantry is close to the main defense line. The attackers at the northern front were supplied by air.

Naval Special Operations Units 60 and 65 were transferred to Utrecht after enemy spearheads had entered Antwerp-Shoeten. The units have lately been reduced as to personnel and materiel to such a degree that they are only conditionally fit for action. They will be withdrawn to a home base for re-organization. Afterwards renewed action is contemplated in the Holland area.

For a short report about the combat between the Special Weapons Flotilla 212 and British tank spearheads on 3 Sept. see Telegram 1840.

II. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

The 7th Minesweeper Flotilla was attacked 15 times by fighter-bomber while on a mine operations north of Hook of Holland. One plane was brought down and slight damage was inflicted to our ships.

In the afternoon of 5 Sept. our convoys, anchored at Helder roads, were unsuccessfully attacked with bombs by enemy planes. Two patrol positions were occupied in the Heligoland Bight.

Continuation of the voyage of convoy 1265 and the steamer ESMERALDA from Helder to Brokum and execution of convoy 1269 from Hook of Holland to Helder as well as continuation of the transfer of the formations from the West Area to the east are contemplated for the night of 6 Sept.

The 7th Minesweeper Flotilla is executing mine operations north of Hook of Holland and the 32nd Minesweeper Flotilla mine operations "Flanders 5 and 6".

6 Sept. 1944

On 6 Sept. beginning at 1825 strong enemy bomber formations attacked Emden; heavy damage was caused. 75% of all dwellings were wiped out. The locks will be in operation again within 24 hours. Details are lacking.

In the Zeeland waters the Navy has made preparations for ferrying and supplying of large army formations. The Army has organized an intercepting staff south of the Scheldt. For action on the Scheldt, the 1st Defense Division was put under the command of Admiral, Netherlands. Due to messages and eyewitness reports, the Admiral, Netherlands is of the opinion that, in spite of the suddenness of the situation the measures prepared in due time for the demolitions in the harbor of Antwerp were started and apparently have even been carried out. The last report of the Port Commanders states: "Shall remain in Antwerp; wireless station was put out of order; security of code is guaranteed."

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Twenty-five planes of the 18th Group were detected on missions.

On the morning of 5 Sept. our air reconnaissance sighted seven merchant ships and five escorts south of the Farøer on south-westerly course.

On the morning of 5 Sept. air reconnaissance observed a British warship of the R-Class and four destroyers. In Murmansk there were 14 Liberty freighters and one destroyer in dry-dock. Two Liberty freighters were observed in Rosta and three ships of 4,000 BRT each in Polyarnoye.

Own Situation:

In the forenoon of 5 Sept. a heavy exchange of artillery fire took place in the Petsamo area. The harbor defense vessel MT 05" was damaged and had to be beached.

On 6 Sept. at 0130 the motor minesweeper R "304" sank east of Ekerø after striking a mine. The area AC 8482/85 was closed on account of possible danger from mines.

Fifteen ships northbound and 49 ships southbound were escorted.

6 Sept. 1944

III. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

1. Enemy Situation:

On 5 Sept. two detonations of mines were observed in connection with an enemy minesweeping force in the Gulf of Finland.

On 5 Sept. wireless traffic established the presence of Staff of Fleet, Staff of Coastal Defense, eleven minesweeping divisions and 60 war vessels or command posts.

On 6 Sept. at 1100 two patrol ships were twelve miles northwest of Hungerburg.

Naval Attache Stockholm transmitted information of the Swedish Navy, according to which vessels of the Swedish Navy would be on operations in the Baltic Sea from 8 to 12 Sept. in an area bordering in the east on the line Faroe-light (Gotland) on 1921 east, in the south on the northern tip of Oeland, in the west on the Swedish coast, and in the north on the Aaland Sea.

2. Own Situation:

Admiral Skagerrak:

Patrol duty on the western coast of Jutland was reduced owing to weather conditions. Sixteen ships were on minesweeping duty in the Baltic Sea Entrances. Convoys were carried out without incident. Work in the shipyard of Helsingør was resumed.

Western and Central Baltic Sea:

Fifty ships were on minesweeping duty. One mine was swept in Kiel Bay, one south of Hela, and two in the Irben Strait.

At Grobau near Libau a Russian female wireless agent was captured with equipment and codes.

In the morning an unknown steamer on westerly course was unsuccessfully bombed by several enemy planes.

In the morning several enemy planes flying singly entered the area of Memel-Libau from the east.

6 Sept. 1944

Admiral, Eastern Baltic:

Guarding of Narva, patrol of net barrages and minesweeping could not be carried out due to bad weather. Only submarines were in the operational area.

On 3 Sept. patrol boat "Ore 67 " ran aground in the Kunda Bay in heavy weather.

Naval Liaison Staff Finland reported on the situation and intentions concerning evacuation of German armed forces, Assault-Gun Brigade 303, and German citizens between 6 Sept. and 9 Sept.

On 6 Sept. at 0500 the minesweepers "M 22 " and "29" with the steamer BEVERIK sailed from Helsingfors to Reval with the fitting-out store Kotaka aboard. Convoys and escorts were carried out as planned.

On 5 Sept. 2,232 tons were transported to Riga and 1,558 tons to Reval to supply Army Group North.

IV. Submarine Warfare.

At 0600 Cape Race repeated an SOS-report of the Canadian cable steamer LADY LAURIER in BB 6912. Our submarines are in this area.

The submarine U "516" did not meet U "855" for supply purposes. For safety's sake a second submarine was sent to the meeting place.

The submarine U "957" reported from Northern Waters that the special survey ship NORD was set afire by surprise fire on 26 Aug. in AX 7553. Food on Dickson Island is scarce according to statements by prisoners, as the supply ship MARINE BASKOWA is supposed to have been sunk by another submarine.

The submarine U "997" reported after her return that in connection with the "Zaunkoenig" attack of 24 Aug. against a destroyer and frigate, detonations and sinking noises were heard twice. The Commander Submarines assumes sinking of both vessels. So far credit was only given for the sinking of a destroyer.

The submarines U "956", "425" and "992" arrived at Hammerfest after carrying out mine operations in the Barents Sea.

The submarine U "679" has started her voyage home from the Gulf of Finland for overhauling.

Nothing to report from the Balck Sea and Mediterranean.

6 Sept. 1944

V. Aerial Warfare.

1. West Area:

Enemy fighter-bomber attacks against transport objectives, marching columns and airfields were reported during the day. 300 Marauders carried out attacks against Brest. In southern France the enemy carried out only limited reconnaissance and fighter-bomber activity. During the night of 6 Sept. five enemy planes were observed over the Scheldt estuary presumably on a mining task.

By day 110 of our planes carried out fighter-bomber attacks and low flying attacks on unrecognized enemy objectives and preparations in the area west of Metz. During the night of 6 Sept. three He 111 planes will supply Brest.

2. Reich Territory:

Aside from planes flying singly or in small formations, about 500 enemy planes entered western Germany in large formations by way of Holland - Belgium. They penetrated as far south as Freiburg and carried out attacks on airfields, traffic objectives, railroad installations, passenger and freight trains.

As reported previously, three hundred other bombers with fighter escort attacked Emden in the afternoon.

During the night of 6 Sept. Hamburg was attacked by 20 to 30 Mosquitoes. Some planes flying singly were over northern and western Germany. Four planes entered the Marburg- Metz area without attacking.

Five planes were reported flying over Denmark presumably for the purpose of dropping agents and supplies in the Viborg - Aalborg area. Three or four enemy planes were confirmed in the Hungarian area. evidently engaged in mining the Danube.

3. Mediterranean Theater:

On 5 Sept. enemy action during the day was again centered on the Adriatic sector of the front area. Otherwise the usual enemy activity was observed.

During the night of 4 Sept. our planes reconnoitered the harbor of Ajaccio and confirmed the formation of three Russian bridgeheads across the Danube south of Bucharest.

6 Sept. 1944

4. East Area:

On the eastern front 507 missions flown by our planes, and 1150 enemy planes downed, are reported.

Report has been made about reconnaissance over the Barents Sea and along the Murmansk coast.

VI. Warfare in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

1. Area of German Naval Command Italy:

Enemy Situation:

On 5 Sept. at 1500 the French cruiser JEANNE D'ARC passed the Strait of Gibraltar eastbound according to an agent's report.

In the area of Nice-Ventimiglia several vessels were on alternating course according to radar location. They were identified at 1700 as one cruiser and two destroyers.

Reconnaissance in the morning of 6 Sept. was incompleting and hindered by weather conditions. Livorno was not included.

Own Situation:

In the course of the heavy air raid of Genoa on 4 Sept. the torpedo boats TA "33" and TA "28" were lost. TA "28" capsized at the dock. The number of missing men is very high. A boiler explosion was caused on the TA "33" by a hit during a boiler test. Another bomb ripped open the hull, causing the sinking of the ship; casualties are probably light. Some harbor shelters were pierced causing many casualties. In addition to the vessels mentioned before, one minesweeper, three patrol, and eight harbor defense vessels were sunk. The hospital ship ERLANGEN was hit by a heavy bomb. Heavy damage was caused to shipyards and docks.

Early on 5 Sept. an enemy plane was brought down by the naval battery Spezia according to a late report.

Two minelaying naval landing craft have laid the first 65 coastal mines type "A" off Carrara. Five mines detonated after being laid.

6 Sept. 1944

A battle ferry sank between Maigherita and Porto Fino while sailing for Genoa.

During the night of 5 Sept. convoy and escort duties were carried out as planned. A minesweeping ship used for towing was hit twice and suffered slight casualties.

2. Area of Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

On 6 Sept. enemy fighter-bombers attacked the harbor of Parenzo and Lagune Grado as well as the naval base Submartin on Brac. The steamer CAGLIARI in Parenzo was again heavily hit and the office of the Port Commander was damaged severely. In Lagune Grado a motor sailing vessel was set afire and beached; the crew suffered casualties.

In the evening the minelayer KIEBITZ and one submarine chaser left Trieste to execute the mine operation "Astrachan".

The following operations are planned for the night of 6 Sept.: operation "Seerose" (seizure of unguarded boats in the central Dalmatian island area) by Naval Shore Commander in collaboration with the Army, and operation "Seydlitz" (Mopping up of the western part of the island Hvar).

b. Aegean Sea.

Harassing activities of the enemy increased against our evacuation transports, submarines, PT boats and planes from Western Greece, Crete and the Dodecanese. At 0426 the submarine chaser 2171 reported a misfired triple spread salvo by an enemy submarine north of Cape Stavros. In the night of 5 Sept. a sea rescue ship was unsuccessfully attacked with torpedoes in the Mirabella Bay (Crete). At 1215 the steamer CAROLA was attacked by twelve planes. Only small damage and few casualties were caused. Two planes were downed.

The withdrawal movements on the Peloponnesos were carried out as planned. The Naval Shore Commander, Western Greece received proper recognition for the excellent execution of transport movements against the Zervas guerillas in Northern Greece.

6 Sept. 1944

c. Black Sea:

The Combat Group Admiral Brinkmann was to leave Sofia for the west in the morning of 6 Sept. The march is to be executed in short stages.

Regarding the mysterious abandonment of Battery "Tirpitz", the former Naval Shore Commander, Rumania, Captain (Navy) Grattenauer reported that the evacuation of the battery was ordered by the Commanding General of Army Group Southern Ukraine who, as Commanding General, Armed Forces, Southeast, was in charge. The order was transmitted by the Regional Commander, Colonel von Oertzen. Further investigation is necessary.

Danube:

A combined combat group consisting of Army, Air, and naval personnel cleared the Rumanian bank of the central Danube up to Moldova. In the course of the combat ship "192" was hit by artillery fire in the bow and some water entered the ship; she cleared four mines. Due to damage suffered the ship had to leave her position.

At the lower end of the rapids the attack was started with two gun carriers, twelve naval landing craft and eight tugs, as well as with the Army troops aboard. Almost the entire ammunition and Prahovo was given to the formation. The remaining ship not joining the formation and the freight vessels in Prahovo were scuttled. The able part of the crews, after being equipped with weapons, was put into action for the defense of the Danube near Prahovo.

The situation of the Ground Combat Group "Rehe" is still tense. Measures for return of the wounded and the Air Force female auxiliaries are being started.

At noon, the Inspector, Minesweeping Danube went to Prahovo by plane with a pilot for the Iron Gate.

During the night of 5 Sept. mines were detected between km 1448 and 1515 as well as between km 1022 and 1233; mine-sweeping vessels eliminated nine mines. Near km 1318 two barges sank after striking mines; one tank barge was damaged near km 1540.

VII. Situation East Asia.

Nothing to report.

7 Sept. 1944

Items of Political Importance.

The Foreign Office has received no official confirmation of the report saying that Bulgaria has declared war on Germany. The report was published by Reuter and the Turkish press.

The names of the members of the Finnish delegation participating in the Moscow armistice negotiations were officially announced in Helsinki.

Conference on the Situation with the Commander in Chief, Navy at 1120.

I. In the course of the discussion on the air situation Naval Staff, Operations Division, Naval Air and Liaison Section states that further curtailments of air operations are necessary due to the fuel shortage. Permission of the High Command, Air is necessary for combat action. Further curtailments are probable.

According to a report by the Air Force, Operations Staff, the Anglo-American airborne Army (6 to 7 divisions) is ready for action in southern England.

II. Naval Staff, Operations Division, Mine Warfare Section reports on measures contemplated for the reinforcement of the "Seeigel" barrages on both sides of Hogland. These intended measures would necessitate use of all electric mines "C" in the area of Admiral, Eastern Baltic, except 150. The question arises whether or not it would be advisable to keep a large reserve in store for the blocking of the waters of the Finnish islands. The Commander in Chief, Navy decides that sufficient mines must be kept in store for the execution of the emergency barrages.

III. In the course of the report by Naval Staff, Operations Division, Staff Officer in charge of the West Area on the situation in Flanders and the Fuehrer order concerning defense of the Scheldt, Commander in Chief, Navy emphasizes that all means, even those outside of his command area, must

7 Sept. 1944

be at the disposal of Naval Command, North for the possibly decisive task of blocking the Scheldt estuary. The Commander in Chief, Naval Staff, personally directed the attention of Commanding Admiral, Naval Command, North to the new task.

Owing to the incomplete demolition of the Antwerp harbor, the Admiral, Small Battle Units is to assign combat swimmers to the Scheldt area to attempt with their help the subsequent demolition of the locks.

The Commander in Chief, Navy agrees to the assignment of Vice Admiral Rieve as Liaison Officer to Army Group B.

IV. Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division reports on various matters:

a. The present set-up of Naval Command, West.

It is ordered that the 3rd (Lorient) and the 4th (La Rochelle) Defense Division be retained with a reduced staff.

The 2nd Defense Division is put under the command of Naval Command, North and remains, for the present, in charge of the assigned vessels.

The Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West, was released of his duties which were taken over by Group West. At present he is in charge of the reorganization of naval units returning from the west at Camp Heuberg.

The Commander, PT Boats was operationally put under the command of Naval Command, North.

This organization must remain in existence as long as any part of the area of Group West is in our hands and until the final tasks have been carried out. Later a reduced staff will be attached to Naval Command, North.

Commander in Chief, Navy agrees.

b. Armed Forces High Command has issued an order to the effect that the simplest quarters possible should be assigned to the office staffs of the Armed Forces returned from the west area.

7 Sept. 1944

c. The installation of the captured heavy Italian guns (38 cm guns of the IMPERO and the heavy artillery of the CAVOUR) is impractical and therefore is not planned; the labor involved is too great.

d. The Commanding Admiral, Naval Command, Baltic is opposed to the intended use of "Spinne" torpedo batteries in the Danish area. The reason is that their range is too small and that the enemy would probably land on the open beach. Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division proposes that in recognition of the aforementioned facts no use be made of the "Spinne" torpedo batteries in Denmark.

Commander in Chief, Navy does not agree with the stand taken by Naval Command, Baltic and decides that this combat means is also to be put into action in Denmark. It would be useful for harbor defense even after a landing on the open beach.

V. The Chief, Bureau of Naval Administration reports that 20,000 men assigned to the Army are ready, and that the first transports already are on the way.

Conference in a Restricted Circle.

VI. Army Situation:

1. West Front:

On 6 Sept. the enemy, after two days of comparative quietness started his push toward the east in several places. In view of the weak defense forces, he succeeded in making several penetrations, which so far could not be closed in all places. The situation of the 15th Army has become more precarious; a break-through to the east is no longer possible. It has orders to escape encirclement by way of Walcheren and Beveland South with all forces not assigned to the fortresses.

Admiral, Netherlands reports that the Army is at present fighting its way back into the bridgehead Zeebrugge-Bruges-Ghent-Warchte-Beke-Stakene, making use of the canals and waterways.

7 sept. 1944

The Commander in Chief, Navy criticizes the absence of a directive stating that a bridgehead must be defended by the Army south of the Scheldt and west of Antwerp. He emphasizes the importance of Antwerp for the enemy.

Admiral Wagner transmits at once this demand to Fuehrer Headquarters.

The defense of the Albert Canal was further strengthened. North of Hasselt the enemy advanced across the Canal; countermeasures are being taken.

Between the ALBERT Canal and the Meuse our defense forces were thrown back. They are supposed to offer resistance along the Hasselt - St. Trous - Huy line. In the Meuse valley 50 to 60 enemy tanks are advancing towards Liege; south of the Meuse the penetrations of the 1st American Army forced the withdrawal to the Huy-Rochefort - Bouillon line. Only the immediate bringing up of the reinforcements repeatedly requested will stabilize the position of the 7th Army.

Northwest of Metz our offensive has been started in order to gain the territory around Etain, to clarify the position of the enemy and to smash enemy forces.. It is aimed at the Longuyon - Brieg line - bridgehead Metz.

The enemy is attacking Metz with infantry and tanks. Gravelotte is encircled. Our main defense line was regained as the result of a counterattack.

Due to strong enemy pressure the 19th Army withdrew behind the Dheune creek. On both sides of Besancon the enemy tried to establish bridgeheads. He was repulsed near Baume les Dames. However, a local bridgehead near Avanne could not be eliminated so far.

The 11th Armored Division is blocking the Montagnes de Le Mont to the Swiss border.

Italian Front:

Western Front:

After bringing up further reinforcements (two Moroccan divisions) the enemy for the first time attacked in close formations along the entire front. At the Mont Cenis our defense forces had to give way to the superior enemy. Besancon was lost.

7 Sept. 1944

Southern Front:

After bringing up fresh forces the enemy continued today his heavy attacks on the Adriatic coast. The attempt of the enemy to force a breakthrough failed again against the dogged resistance of our troops, who repulsed all attacks and sealed off local penetrations by brisk counterattacks. 30 Enemy tanks were destroyed.

Balkans:

Our withdrawal continues according to plan. The revolutionary movement in Serbia is growing. The Bulgarian troops in that area offered only slight resistance when they were disarmed.

Eastern Front:

Army Group Southern Ukraine:

The advance of the 2nd Hungarian Army met with increased enemy resistance and achieved only a slight gain in territory. In Transylvania the fighting continues with alternating success. The front between Gyergyoszent and Kimpulung had to be taken back.

Regrouping of the enemy forces is being continued near the Northern Carpathian Mountains and the Beskides.

Army Group Northern Ukraine, Center and North:

In Warsaw another part of the city was taken.

The defensive battle along the Narew is continuing with undiminished fury. The Russians, in heavy and constantly changing fighting, succeeded in extending their bridgeheads near Ostrykol and Machein and is taking Ostrolenka on the east bank of the Narew after an embittered struggle. Twenty-two tanks were destroyed. The preparations of the enemy for an attack in Kurland are being continued. A push in the direction of Ventspils-Liepaja is expected.

In view of the threatening development on the Scheldt and of the demolition measures to be carried out in the Dutch major ports, the Commander in Chief, Navy again and again emphasizes that at the present moment much depends on preventing the enemy from gaining possession of efficient harbors and together protected places suitable for unloading. It was criminal negligence to abandon Antwerp so quickly. As the result of it the few naval men did not find the time to carry out the planned demolitions, especially after the death of the Port Commander. Now it is of principal importance that both banks of the Scheldt estuary remain in our hands, so that the enemy cannot enter the river. The happenings in

7 Sept. 1944

Antwerp must under no circumstances be repeated in Rotterdam and Amsterdam. These major ports are to be defended as fortresses until the demolitions have been carried out.

The Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters is ordered to bring this opinion of the Commander in Chief, Navy to the attention of the Fuehrer prior to the conference on the situation.

Special Items.

I. The Commanding Admirals of the Groups and Naval Commands etc. will receive information about the situation as of the evening of 7 Sept. per "Gkdos. 27769/44".

II. For the execution of his task in the west the Commanding General, West, Field Marshal von Rundstedt, was given special authority which embraces the Navy as well as the Air Force. The Commanding Generals of Belgium-Northern France and the Netherlands are put under the command of the Commanding General, West in every respect. (1/Skl 27713/44 Gkdos.)

The Armed Forces High Command expanded in a similar manner the authority of the Commanding General, Army Group E after Greece was declared a combat zone. He was given special authority for deciding what priority ratings should be used in the evacuation movements. In addition, all branches of the service have to give the Commanding General, Army Group E complete information about all measures and orders, as well as to report their supplies and evacuation plans (1/Skl 27628/44 Gkdos.)

III. The Armed Forces High Command issued an order, effective immediately, about the treatment of Bulgarian members of the armed forces within the German sphere of influence. Bulgarians who declared themselves willing to fight on our side or to work for us are to be placed at the disposal of the various branches of the armed forces, while all others who are not willing will become military internees.

IV. In connection with the reinforcing of the coastal defense of Istria, Group South issued an order on 5 Sept. as per "Gkdos. 764" to Admiral, Adriatic Sea, for the accelerated laying of new mine barrages and the reinforcement of artillery protection.

7 Sept. 1944

In a supplement to Naval Staff, Operations Division, Group South asks the question what value is attached to Pola as submarine base, and whether additional defense measures should be taken. This could, however, be done solely at the expense of areas located farther to the rear.

Naval Staff, Operations Division replies as per "2746/44 Gkdos." that Pola has to be defended as long as possible, because it is besides Salamis the only submarine base in the Mediterranean. Special defense constructions, at the expense of other areas, are however out of the question.

V. Bureau of Naval Armament, Chief, of Torpedo Branch issues a basic order (4628 Gkdos.) for the manufacture of additional torpedoes. This has become necessary due to losses incurred in the western Area and due to demands made by the Admiral, Small Battle Units. The order states that the Commander in Chief, Navy has decided that the manufacture of the G 7a torpedoes be continued according to present plans; that the manufacture of G 7e torpedoes, however should be increased in the speediest way possible from 400 to 1050 per month. The final plan calls for from 800 to 1200 per month; factory facilities must be provided by March 1945. The manufacture of T 5 torpedoes will be kept up at the present rate.

VI. Naval Staff, Naval Intelligence Division sends the enemy situation report No. 17 (5368/44 Gkdos.) to the usual recipients. Therein attention is directed to the forces still present in England and the operations for which they might be used.

Copy as per "1/Skl 27817/44 Gkdos." in War Diary, Part D, Volume 8b.

About the present state of warfare against merchant shipping it is said that the tonnage of the Allies is estimated at about 44,7 million BRT at the beginning of Sept.

The probable location of the Anglo-American naval forces is given in an appendix.

In addition Naval Staff, Naval Intelligence Division, Foreign Armies in the brief report No. 16/44 issues intelligence about the new landing bridges of the Allies with conveyer belts, about the US Victory ships and about various other aspects of neutral merchant shipping. Copy as per "1/Skl 34393/44 geh." in War Diary, Part D, Volume 8f.

VII. Naval Commands Baltic and North receive instructions by "1/Skl 1 Ops 27571/44 Gkdos." to check the defense readiness of the naval fortresses and the bases in the home area

7 Sept. 1944

against attacks from land. The Naval Commands have to make sure that the defenses around the entire fortresses are completed at an accelerated pace; that sufficient supplies are secured. The present state of the fortresses as well as plans with regard to the future must be reported.

VIII. An order was given to the German Naval Command, Italy by "1/Skl I Ops 2792/44 Gkdos. Chefs." with copy to Group South and Admiral, Adriatic Sea, to report to Naval Staff by 11 Sept. the results of the discussions with the Commanding General, Southwest about the study ordered by the Fuehrer concerning withdrawal of Army Group C to the defense position in the Lower Alps.

IX. Naval Command Baltic reports as per "Op 05720" that according to the 9th Defense Division, the Finns prepare the evacuation of all civilian and military personnel from the area east of the boundary of 1940; this includes also the island of Hogland. It is done because it is assumed that the Russian terms will at least demand these boundaries.

X. Army General Staff has in conjunction with "Operations Division IA 440530 Chefs." issued a directive regarding future warfare in the east. An excerpt from this is sent by Naval Staff, Operations Division in "2716/44 Gkdos. Chefs." to Naval Command, Baltic and Admiral, Eastern Baltic.

XI. The following is taken from the situation report of Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters: The Hungarian troops reached the designated points in the course of their attack south of Cluj. A recent agent report, confirmed by several sources, speaks of rumors prevailing in the country that the Anglo-American forces will carry out airborne landings there in agreement with the Hungarian Government.

In Slovakia the fights with partisans have become more severe after the escape of General Katlos.

Bulgaria has asked Moscow for an armistice; the situation is not at all clear.

Increasing activity of the partisans in the central Balkans is making the withdrawal movements from Greece more difficult. Permission for the evacuation of Lemnos was given by the Fuehrer.

On the occasion of receipt of the reports from the various naval

7 Sept. 1944

sectors the Fuehrer pointed out that "Today in contrast to 1918, wherever the Navy is fighting, exemplary steadfastness and unique courage can be noticed."

Situation 7 Sept.

I. Situation West Area.

1. Enemy Situation:

Air reconnaissance activity was normal. At 1423 British vessels were located in AM 5260 and 1451 in BF 4187.

2. Own Situation:

Atlantic Coast - Channel Coast:

During the night of 6 Sept. the last vessels of the 2nd Defense Division, the motor minesweepers R "43" and "48", were transferred to the Holland area. Thus the tasks of the 2nd Defense Division have come to an end.

The Commander in Chief, Navy has sent to the Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West and for information to Group West and Fleet, on the occasion of the disbandment of the organization of Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West the following proclamation:

"The present war situation demands the disbandment of your outstanding organization. The various formations of the Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West can look over four years of great achievements, outstanding military deeds and proud successes. Always in the foremost line, in the face of the enemy, your defense forces have carried out all tasks assigned to them in the waters of the Channel, in the Bay of Biscay and along the French south coast in an admirable manner in spite of the air and naval superiority of the enemy which is becoming more and more crushing every day. The performances, the experiences, the fighting spirit and the unique coordination of the various formations have been exemplary. To you, to the Division Commanders, Flotilla Commanders, Commanders and crews I express my gratitude and highest appreciation for your performances and achievements. New tasks will be assigned. Your experienced men, animated by the "Channel" spirit, will likewise distinguish themselves in other places, at other fronts in the same manner."

7 Sept. 1944

Land Situation:

Brest:

The main line of defense had to be shortened due to strong enemy pressure on the fortress itself, on the Crozon peninsula, and on the Le Conquet sector. Our artillery tried to prevent enemy concentrations. According to a report by the Sea Defense Command, all heavy guns of the batteries "Graf Spee" and "Camaret" were put out of action by an air raid on 6 Sept. In the northern sector ten heavy anti-aircraft guns still intact, on Crozon there are 14 guns; in addition there are 42 naval guns of different calibers. The Naval Propaganda Detachment, Brest, was put into action as infantry in the Le Conquet sector. Further search by the PT boat S "112" for the blasting detachment of Ouessant remained without success.

Last night a plane brought supplies to the fortress. During the coming night three planes will partake in this mission.

Lorient: One submarine left the harbor. The artillery fire on the enemy is still insignificant; 37 ship guns are ready for action on land. Six supply bombs were dropped by a supply plane.

Gironde North and South: Both fortress commanders reported the strength of their garrisons. The garrison at Gironde North consists of 106 officers, 25 officials, 791 non-commissioned officers, 3794 soldiers, and 91 wounded. Share of the Navy 728 men.

The withdrawal movements in central France are being continued. On 5 Sept mechanized naval units of an unknown strength passed Dijon. A rather large formation from the area of the Gironde passed Decize on 4 Sept. Contrary to the order of the Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West, part of the naval personnel was retained by the Army for defense purposes, evidently on account of the difficult situation.

Three naval regiments from Bordeaux reached Dun S'Auron (southeast of Bourges) by 5 Sept.

On 7 Sept. a column of 800 submarine men arrived at Metz, to be taken to the Camp Ploen.

Since the intercepting camp Heuberg is already fully occupied, barracks in Tuebingen are requisitioned.

7 Sept. 1944

The Armed Forces High Command issued an order "WEST Org. Nr. 0010866/44 Gkdos." for the Organization Staff G, which says in part that the specially trained personnel, returning from France and necessary for further naval warfare, should be exempted from defending the Western Front. According to a directive by the High Command, Navy this applies particularly to crews of submarines and E boats, and to other seafaring specialists.

Area Belgium/Scheldt Estuary: The following order is issued by Naval Staff, Operations Division about the defense of the Scheldt estuary to Naval Group, West, Naval Command, North, Admiral, Netherlands and Admiral, Channel Coast:

"1. Due to the rapid developments in the Holland area there is no assurance that the harbor of Antwerp was thoroughly destroyed. A highly serviceable harbor at the disposal of the enemy directly in front of the German western border can become decisive. It is therefore necessary, and now the primary task of Naval command, North (Admiral, Netherlands), to develop the present blocking of the Scheldt into an insurmountable blockade. All necessary mines and ships usable for blocking, etc. must be speedily secured with utmost energy and for definite purposes. Additional forces and means needed are to be requested immediately. Action of Naval Special Operations Units and Special Weapons will be ordered by the Admiral; Small Battle Units and is to be supported locally.

2. Responsibility for execution rests with Naval Command, North (Admiral, Netherlands). All available forces in the area of Naval Group, West, Admiral, Channel Coast and 2nd Defense Division are also at his disposal for this purpose. Action of PT boats for minelaying to be ordered by Naval Command, North.

3. The defense of Walcheren and the southern bank of the Scheldt on both sides of Breskens as a fortress was requested of the Armed Forces High Command. A decision favoring the request is to be expected. Therefore preparations for ample coastal and anti-aircraft artillery and infantry defense should be made.

4. Naval Command, North is to report continuously on plans and situation."

The threatening situation has already led to considerations concerning the destruction of Rotterdam and Amsterdam. Naval Command, North and Admiral, Netherlands are instructed as per l/Skl I op 2795/44 Gkdos, Chfs., about the intentions of the Fuehrer as follows:.

7 Sept. 1944

"1. Excerpt from Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff op No. 77 3274/44 Gkdos. Chefs.:

The Fuehrer has again emphasized that for blocking of the Scheldt not only the islands Schouwen, Walcheren and Beveland but also the bridgehead on the mainland opposite Flushing must be defended. The extent of the bridgehead to the south has to conform to the flooding level. All batteries are to be included into the bridgehead, especially the Battery "Cadéand."

2. The Fuehrer again points out that the complete inundation of the northern Belgian area is of decisive importance for the fortresses and the Scheldt islands. Inundations are to be carried out to the fullest extent possible.

3. Formations of the 15th Army, as far as they do not remain in the fortresses, in the bridgehead around Breskens and on the islands, are to be used to reinforce the coastal front of the Commanding General, Netherlands. Available engineer forces including engineer forces of the divisions are to be organized and to be used in connection with the destruction of the harbors of Rotterdam and Antwerp.

4. The Fuehrer himself will set the time for the begin of demolition of the harbors of Rotterdam and Amsterdam. Preparations for the destruction of the two harbors must be made energetically so that the destruction itself can be carried out at short notice as in Cherbourg and St. Malo."

According to reports received by Naval Staff the destruction of the harbors of Flanders which were not declared fortresses was evidently not carried out to the necessary and proper extent. According to a report by the Naval Shore Commander, Pas de Calais made in the afternoon of 6 Sept., there is not a single Army soldier in Zeebrugge and Ostend, solely naval and army coastal artillery and some anti-aircraft artillery personnel with which is without a uniform command and without any directives whatsoever. According to the Chief, Army Command 15 this condition was brought about by the fact that both harbors were not declared a defense area. The Naval Shore Commander is of the opinion that a decision must be made immediately about the status of these two harbors and that, if necessary, fortress commanders must be appointed.

In reply, Admiral, Channel Coast stated at 2346 that a decision has been requested from the Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West and that, for the time being, the harbors are to be defended under the command of the port commanders.

7 Sept. 1944.

At midnight Group West radios that the harbors of Ostend and Zeebrugge are to be destroyed completely by orders of the Commander in Chief, West without regard to small vessels bringing in supplies. Navy units, Army coastal artillery, anti-aircraft artillery should attach themselves to the withdrawal movements of the Army and the crossing of the Scheldt, taking along as many arms as possible.

The energetic orders by the Admiral, Netherlands to the naval forces returning from the west - partially contrary to existing intentions and orders - have led to some complaints. This however is due to the difficult situation in the Scheldt estuary where every vessel is needed for ferrying service and for defense. Decisions on the part of the Naval Staff are to the effect that the formations are to remain in the Dutch area as long as the military situation requires that. Admiral, Netherlands receives the directive to release the naval forces as soon as the situation permits and to report at a later date the causes for a possible delayed departure.

Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Organization and Mobilization Branch issues additional orders, Gkdos. 4570/44 concerning the authority over the troops returning from the west.

According to Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, 772965 Gkdos. Chfs. the Reich Commissioner for the occupied Netherlands, Reich Minister Dr. Syess-Inquart was charged with the responsibility for the completion of the western defenses in the Maastricht sector to west of Aachen.

Owing to the present development of the situation in the west, the Naval Command, North requests permission to postpone the planned barrages in the Dutch area in preference to those intended in the Heligoland Bight. It proposes to plant moored mines near Borkum, Heligoland and Sylt, partially under cover of our inland batteries. The number of mines needed for the barrages are 1,200 EMC mines and 1,200 EMR mines.

The Naval Staff decides as follows:

"Due to the limited number of mines manufactured in October only about 600 EMC mines and 400 CMR mines can probably be delivered for the mentioned area. Corresponding plans are to be submitted."

Area Channel Coast:

In the course of the air raid on Le Havre on 5 Sept. the shelter of the 18th Minesweeper Flotilla was pierced; three

7 Sept. 1944

harbor defense boats and one tug sank. Several other vessels were heavily damaged and communication lines were affected considerably. Partial mining of the harbor has been started

In the morning of 6 Sept. the Artillery Group Gris Nez shelled tank concentrations near Marquise. At 1145 enemy tanks, which were shelling the territory east of the Battery "Lindemann", were forced to withdraw. At 1330 the lightship VARNEBANK which had been stationed there by the British during the night was destroyed by artillery fire. At 1340 a turret of the Battery "Grosser Kurfuerst" was inactivated by a barrel burst.

II. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

Weather conditions prevented patrol positions along the Dutch coast and in the Heligoland Bight from being occupied. Convoys and transfers were carried out as planned. On 6 Sept. at 2015 40 torpedo planes attacked the Elbe-Weser traffic near the lightship "E". The lightship itself, the Norwegian steamer BREDA and the Swedish steamer ROSAFRED were sunk. Two planes were brought down and two caught fire.

At 2040 the convoy group off Helder was attacked by fighter-bombers causing casualties.

The air raid on Emden on 6 Sept. was carried out by 300 planes which dropped 1500 bombs and several thousand incendiary bombs; some of them were of a large caliber. Heavy damage was caused to the town; the locks are supposed to be in operation again within 24 hours. Numerous other air raids against our sea lanes were carried out over the entire sea by small groups of enemy planes. The 8th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla swept two British air mines "A" in AN 8295 (Schulpengat). More mine barrages were planted off the Scheldt estuary, off Hook and off Vlieland.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

1. Enemy Situation:

The enemy air activity was normal. On 6 Sept. at

7 Sept. 1944

1902, Hammerfest located an American vessel in 319°, and at 2231 Svanvik located an aircraft carrier in 245°.

According to an aerial picture of the Kola Bay taken on 6 Sept., one British battleship of the R-class with four destroyers was present in the Vajenga Bay. Fourteen Liberty freighters, one destroyer in floating dock and one freighter were present in the harbor of Murmansk.

2. Own Situation:

Convoy tasks were carried out as planned.

Naval Commands, Baltic Sea and Norway were instructed by 1/Skl 33663/44 geh. that the Armed Forces High Command has granted the request made by the Finnish Headquarters to let the Finnish patrol boat TURJA and the trawler RULJA from the Arctic Ocean sail through the Norwegian waters and the Baltic Sea to Turku.

III. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea entrances, Baltic Sea.

1. Enemy Situation:

During the night of 6 Sept. several long distance night fighters were over Schleswig-Holstein, presumably for the shielding of the harrassing attack on Hamburg.

The usual Russian naval forces and commanders were confirmed in radio traffic in the Gulf of Finland.

2. Own Situation:

Admiral Skagerrak:

Along the Jutland coast our activity was also restricted due to weather conditions. Convoys in the Kattegat, among them several troops transports, were carried out as planned. The Coastal Mine "A" Formation put out another coastal mine "A" barrage on the east coast of Jutland and arrived in Frederikshavn at 1531.

Western and Central Baltic Sea:

Normal minesweeping activity was carried out by 57 vessels; one mine was swept south of Langeland. One Ju 52 minesweeping plane crashed cause unknown.

7 Sept. 1944

Admiral, Eastern Baltic:

According to a report by Naval Liaison Staff Finland, the transports bringing home German citizens will probably take place on 9 Sept. The Embassy is to leave for Stockholm on 12 Sept.

The Naval Liaison Staff reports via Hogland that the Finns are continuing the evacuation. The report of the 9th Defense Division is likewise important. It states that the Finns are preparing the civilian and military evacuation of the entire area east of the boundary of 1940, including the island Hogland, being firmly convinced that the Russians are going to demand at least this boundary.

Several troops transports in Helsinki are taking aboard the 303rd Assault Gun Brigade. The Naval Liaison Officer at the Army General Staff reported figures about the Army Group, North (as of 1 July 1944)

- A. 520,000 men incl. 43,000 Russian volunteers
- B. 147,000 horses
- C. 1,932 artillery guns.

The Naval Command, Baltic Sea reported as per 828/44 Gkdes. that the Finnish Navy has agreed to sweep an auxiliary passage for shipping through the Suedra Kvarken and will probably have cleared this area by 9 or 10 Sept. The Naval Command, Baltic Sea has agreed to this plan, since it almost corresponds to our own intentions; the Finns are willing to set up the three directing lights. The new boundary of the declared area east of Maerket will be fixed in the east after the close of the minesweeping operations. Naval Command, Baltic Sea will report the opening of the passage.

After the Finnish Consul in Danzig reported to the Chief, Navy Office Danzig, that the Finnish ships are planning to go to Sweden after unloading, Naval Staff, Operations Division asked the Armed Forces High Command as per 27729/44 Gkdes. for confirmation that the release of the Finnish ships, after unloading of German goods, was to be maintained.

IV. Submarine Warfare.

Late reports from submarines reveal that the submarine commanded by Lehmann - in operations against the PQ 32 on 24 Aug. in AC 5499 - sank a freighter in addition to the destroyer already

7 Sept. 1944

reported, and that the submarine commanded by Schaar sank in the Kara Sea by surprise fire the Russian survey ship NORD and brought in important prisoners.

The Turkish Government refused to take over the last three submarines in the Black Sea. The Commanders therefore recieved orders to scuttle the boats secretly between the Bosphorus and the Turkish northern boundary. The crews should try to reach Greece in small groups.

V. Aerial Warfare.

1. West Area/ Reich Territory:

In spite of considerable reconnaissance activity in the area of the Scheldt estuary and along the Belgian and Dutch coast, no attacks so far took place at the Scheldt crossings. During the night 60 to 70 Mosquitoes were in action over Belgium, Northern France; they likewise attacked Karsruhe causing damage to buildings.

2. Mediterranean Theater:

800 four-engined planes, entering from southern Italy by way of Albania and western Serbia, attacked Belgrade and the Save bridges. The two bridges were slightly damaged. Another 80 four-engined planes after crossing Albania, attacked the railroad junction Nish at 1215. About 400 fighters and fighter-bombers were active in the Italian front area; some of these planes carried out gunfire attacks on transport installations and on one town of Udine. At night 45 planes supplied the Balkan partisans while four planes mined the Danube between Budapest and Esseg.

Fifty planes were active over the southern area of France.

3. East Area:

In 479 own and 1105 enemy flights two planes were lost and 36 shot down.

7 Sept. 1944

VI. Warfare in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea:

1. Area Naval Command Italy:

At 1700 a convoy consisting of 49 freighters and two tankers with seven corvets passed the Strait of Gibraltar from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean.

According to an agent report of 6 Sept. seven aircraft carriers have recently arrived in Alexandria for repairs after having taken part in the invasion of southern France.

Our convoy and defense tasks by night were carried out as planned. Activities of enemy air and naval forces were of the usual kind. The area north of Mentone was shelled from the sea at noon and in the afternoon.

Last night two Italian PT boats carried out a mine task east of Rimini and contacted the enemy. After an engagement with three PT boats, in the course of which one received an observed hit, the mines had to be laid in an emergency drop 0.5 miles from the planned location. The hospital ship TUEBINGEN arrived at Trieste.

2. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

Operation "Seydlitz I" (mopping up of the western part of the island of Hvar) was carried out during the night of 6 Sept. as planned; three boats of the 7th PT Boat Flotilla took part in the operation.

During the operation "Scerose" (seizure of unguarded boats in the area of the Dalmatian islands), which was started last night, 15 boats have been seized so far.

In the evening of 6 Sept. five boats of the 21st PT Boat Flotilla arrived in Leucas from the Aegean Sea; three of them will sail on to Corfu. The other two boats must remain in Leucas due to engine trouble.

b. Aegean Sea:

The enemy air reconnaissance was of the usual kind. Along the east coast of the Peloponnesus, six additional motor sailing vessels and several small vessels used by partisans were sunk last night.

CONFIDENTIAL

7 Sept. 1944

According to an agent report, strong partisan forces are being concentrated close to Salonika ready for an attack which can be expected at any time. According to the agents, the difficult situation in Greece is primarily due to the interruption of communications and the cessation of all travel possibilities. The financial situation is chaotic.

c. Danube:

On the lower Danube, large numbers of ferrying boats in several places were confirmed by air reconnaissance in the forenoon; however so far no ferrying service has been observed. The Combat Group "Iron Gate" fought its way out of the Moldova area with two gun carriers and minesweeping vessels and with about 25 tugs. Details are lacking.

The attack on the lower rapids (Operation "Wassernixe") failed. The Combat Group Stelter returned to Praha after the Engineer Battalion 214 lost almost all assault boats. Heavy shelling from both banks.

Rear Admiral Zieb reports that he scuttled the greater part of his ships, because the directive by Group South, instructing him to try the break-through again as German reinforcements were approaching to free the Iron Gate, was received too late. The boats and ships still in fighting condition however are available. Rear Admiral Zieb is going to Belgrade to make his report.

At present there is communication with Combat Group Rehe.

At km 1222 a tug was heavily damaged by a mine.

CONFIDENTIAL

8 Sept. 1944

Items of Political Importance.

1. The official Bulgarian declaration of war on Germany took place at 1800 over radio Sofia. In the announcement it was stated that Russian troops had crossed the Bulgarian border in the morning of 8 Sept. Varna has been occupied by the Russians. The Bulgarian population is asked to give all possible support to the Russian troops. This report was transmitted to all front commands as per 3/Skl 11339/44 geh. (See War Diary, Part D, VIIIA).

The situation in Bulgaria is evidently undergoing rapid changes.

The Russian Information Office issued an extensive declaration by the Russian Foreign Commissariat stating that Russia has broken off relations with Bulgaria and is now in a state of war with Bulgaria.

The Bulgarian people are more or less openly asked to take now matters into their own hands, to take care of their own national interests, to counteract tendencies of the ruling classes. It is not probable that the present transitional government Muravieff will remain in power much longer.

2. The Rumanian Foreign Minister published a document which contains the declaration that Hungary is at war with Rumania. The armistice negotiations between Russia and Rumania are ostensibly making "good progress". A final settlement has not been reached so far due to the fact that the Rumanian delegation has refused to accept the Russian demand of sending 1,5 million Rumanians for reconstruction work to Russia. In the meantime the occupation of the entire country by the Russian army was completed.

The events here as well as in Bulgaria clearly indicate what course matters will take, once nations or governments make themselves defenseless.

3. In Great Britain an extensive official report was published about the effectiveness of "V 1" up to the present. It is worth noting that the Anglo-Americans lost 450 planes and 2,900 flying personnel in combatting this retaliation measure. Of about 8,000 launched bombs 2,300 supposedly reached London. The defense measures are said to have reached such a degree of efficiency that most of them can now be shot down before reaching their targets.

4. In Tokyo the 85th special session of the Parliament was solemnly opened with the reading of a message from the Emperor in which the entire nation is called upon to use all

8 Sept. 1944

its strength at this decisive moment. Prime Minister Koiso commented on the internal and foreign policy of Japan. The Commanders in Chief of the various branches of the armed forces briefly reviewed the military situation.

5. The Finnish armistice delegation left Finnish territory on 7 Sept. and its 14 delegates will arrive in Moscow at 1430.

6. The cabinet change in Portugal seems to be a clever move on the part of Salazar for the purpose of strengthening the internal unity and, at the same time, covering up certain totalitarian or fascist aspects.

Conference with the Commander in Chief, Navy at 1120.

I. Naval Staff, Operations Division, Chief of Operations Branch reports on the request of Group West to dispatch hospital ships to the western French fortresses for removal of the wounded. The Commander in Chief, Navy orders to investigate the possibility of sending the hospital ship BERLIN from Germany to Brest as well as the transfer of the small hospital ship ROSTOCK from Lorient to Spain already announced. The Foreign Office will be notified.

II. Naval Staff, Operations Division, Mine Warfare Section reports on the present plans for mining and blocking of the Scheldt and on the progress of the work. The Commander in Chief, Navy emphasized again the importance of these measures and the necessity to give Naval Command, North every support in this matter.

III. Naval Staff, Operations Division, Chief of Operations Branch reports on orders issued by the Armed Forces High Command concerning the extension of the authority of the Commanding General Army Group E and Commanding Admiral, Defenses, West as well as concerning the completion of the western defenses in the Holland area. (See War Diary 7 Sept.).

IV. Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division reports on the order of the General of the Engineers concerning construction of defenses in the Heligoland Bight.

In this connection Naval Command, North submits a report "Gkdos. 2341" on the state of construction which in its

8 Sept. 1944

present condition is highly unsatisfactory. Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division also reports that the construction of the Battery "Suomi" in the Petsamo area will be continued and will probably be completed by the end of March. Disregarding the eventual necessity for a change of name, this matter will have to be brought in step with the pace of the military development of the coming days.

Naval Staff, Quartermaster General has also discussed with Commanding Admiral, Naval Group, South the possible placing of German Naval Command, Italy under the command of Group South. Commander in Chief, Navy is of the opinion that it would not be advisable to change the well functioning organization without any cogent reason. At present there is no necessity for making changes.

V. Naval Staff, Chief of Naval Intelligence Division reports that armistice terms for Finland have not yet been announced in Moscow. He also reports that on the basis of information received from the Foreign Office the Japanese have declared to the Portuguese their readiness to withdraw their troops from the Timor Island provided that Portugal could guarantee the neutrality of the island. This clearly shows that Japan tries to prevent intensification of the situation.

The panic in Bulgaria is said to be increasing. The attitude of the Bulgarian Armed Forces is wavering, a part is apparently willing to join our troops.

At present negotiations are taking place with rebellious Poles in Warsaw aiming at the signing of an armistice.

Conference in a Restricted Circle.

VI. Army Situation:

Western Front:

In Flanders our forces withdrew fighting to the Zeebrugge-Bruges - Gent - Stekans line; 20 out of 80 enemy tanks were destroyed.

Heavy defensive combat along the Stadan - Roulas - Channel line.

The enemy advanced towards Dunkirk and entered Nieuport.

8 Sept. 1944

The front along the Albert Canal was strengthened by reinforcement. In Antwerp the enemy succeeded in bringing more tanks into the area just north of the harbor basins. Fighting around Merxsen is still going on.

Near Beeringen the enemy formed a bridgehead across the Albert Canal which was cut off. Thirty tanks, which broke through near Beverloo, are being pursued.

The enemy achieved large gains on both sides of the Meuse against the battle-weary 7th Army; this necessitated further withdrawal. Likewise the northern flank of the 1st Army had to be taken back. Since the requested reinforcements have not arrived, the situation of the 1st Army still remains critical.

Between Andenne and Ciney the enemy caught up repeatedly with our retreating forces.

The situation of the 1st Army necessitates withdrawal to the Libremont - Izel - Montmedy line.

Strong enemy tank forces advanced to the Meuse; their attempt at crossing could be repulsed.

The western part of the Metz bridgehead was narrowed down due to the loss of Gravelotte and Bois de Vaux.

The 19th Army will retreat to the Dijon - Dole line.

Enemy Situation:

In northern France the Canadian Army appears to be engaged in mopping up of the French-Belgian coastal sector and in taking possession of the ports. Whether the 2nd British Army will advance from its bridgeheads across the Albert Canal in northern direction towards Holland or towards the east into the Rhenish industrial area cannot yet be ascertained. About 12 to 15 large formations are at the disposal of the enemy for these attacks.

The intended use of an army corps on the southern flank prevents the American Army Group for the present from establishing an overwhelming concentration of forces. However, a considerable threat to the northern flank of the withdrawing German 19th Army is hereby caused.

8 Sept. 1944

Italian Front:

In the entire sector of the 14th Army the enemy followed our withdrawal movements to the Gothic line only hesitatingly.

At the 10th Army the enemy after our defensive successes of the past days, restricted himself to a smaller sector than hitherto, owing to his high number of casualties. In spite of our numerous losses all attempts at a break-through have failed again.

Local penetrations were mopped up or sealed off; 27 tanks were destroyed.

Enemy troops transfers led to a further weakening of the 5th American Army in Italy and revealed the very limited strength of the American forces in the Mediterranean theater. The 92nd American Infantry Division which apparently consists of Negroes only, was put into the field for the first time in Italy under the command of white officers.

In the sector of concentration near the Adriatic Sea the attacking forces of the enemy amount to about eight major formations with about 700 tanks. As far as operational reserves are concerned the enemy has at his disposal in the Mediterranean theater besides the four and a half Polish divisions only one British army corps with two divisions. It is expected that the Polish divisions will later be used in the Balkans.

Eastern Front:

Army Group Southern Ukraine and North Ukraine:

The continual shifting of enemy forces from the Bucharest area westward may be viewed as being directed against Serbia and Bulgaria. Nevertheless the enemy has at his disposal sufficient forces which can be put into action at the same time for the protection of his flank in the "Iron Gate" - Arad area and keep open thereby the mountain exits into the Hungarian plains.

The future developments will be decided as hitherto by political considerations and may lead to surprising changes.

In the area south of Cluj-Neumark our attack is being continued.

Enemy concentrations between Stanislaw and Sanok are being continued.

Combat activity between Sanok and the Vistula was increased.

8 Sept. 1944

The area east of Presov in eastern Slovakia was mopped up.

Army Group Center:

The combats on Warsaw continue to be favorable for us. The bitter struggle on the Narew goes on with undiminished fury. In the past days our troops suffered very high losses in personnel and war material. The enemy succeeded in forming new bridgeheads across the Narew in several places, and in extending the existing bridgeheads. (As an example: the combat strength of a German division is 350 men.)

The enemy is concentrating more tank forces in the area south of Mitau.

Special Items.

I. The Commanding Admiral, Group West issued a proclamation to the "Naval Personnel of the West" on the occasion of the abandonment of France and of the transfer of many of his former subordinates to the Army. (Skl 34122/44 in War Diary, Part _____. Tr. N.: the blank appears in the German original.)

II. Naval Staff Naval Intelligence Division gives information to the front commands about the enemy situation in Great Britain and the Mediterranean as well as excerpts from the evaluation of the enemy situation as made by the Army General Staff, Foreign Armies, West. The threat to the Dutch area is especially emphasized where landings from the air or from the sea could aim at outflanking the German west front and at opening the way into the Ruhr area. Simultaneously the last launching bases of the "V 1" could thereby be eliminated. (Copies as per 1/Skl 27834, 27809, and 27835/44 Gkdocs. in War Diary, Part C, VIIIa.)

III. In regard to the presence of a British battleship of the "R" class (see War Diary, 7 Sept.) revealed by an aerial picture, Naval Command, Norway is of the opinion that this could be either the ship which was damaged by the submarine commanded by Lange on 23 August or the escort vessel for a new QP convoy. Finally the ship could be intended for the protection of a combined operation against the Arctic coast in the process of being organized.

The participation of bombers requested by Naval Command, Norway had to be refused by the 5th Air Force because of fuel scarcity.

8 Sept. 1944

Nevertheless, Naval Command, Norway asks to impress the importance of this matter on the High Command, Air because of increased enemy activity in the Polar area and in consideration of the favorable possibilities for an attack on the worthwhile objective.

Commander in Chief, Navy agrees.

Naval Staff, Operations Division, Naval Air and Air Force Liaison Section reports on the measures taken by the Air Force in regard to the disbandment of staffs and formations of combat forces (9th Air Corps, 2nd Air Force, 2nd Air Division, 10th Air Corps, 4th Air Corps).

Participation of the Air Force in minelaying operations will also be discontinued; in the future the tasks of the Air Force will be confined exclusively to day and night fighting and to actions by fighter-bombers.

Naval Air and Air Force Liaison Section reports furthermore on the result of the conference held on the evening of 7 Sept. between the representative of the General of the Reconnaissance Flyers and the Chief of Submarine Division about long distance reconnaissance for submarine warfare. A number of technical and tactical items were discussed, which are affairs of the Air Force only. It has now been established that the hitherto used long distance reconnaissance plane Me 264 is obsolete; it is too slow and too slightly armed considering the long flight over enemy territory now necessary.

Commander in Chief, Navy expresses the opinion that he was solely interested in sufficient reconnaissance. How and with what type of plane this is to be achieved is not the concern of the Navy.

IV. In the War Diary of the Commander, 1st Combat Group it is pointed out in connection with the report on the futile attack on the TIRPITZ on 17 July that the observed transfer of Anglo-American fighters and bombers - especially of the 15th American Air Fleet - to Russia may suggest that such bombers could also be transferred to the Murmansk area. Thus the danger of major air raids on the Alta area will increase. Air Force, Operations Staff was asked to comment and replied on 6 Sept. that such attacks were held to be improbable, as the transfers of Anglo-American Air Forces to Russia up to now are valued only as an experiment on account of the unsatisfactory results.

The 1st Combat Group will be informed accordingly.

8 Sept. 1944

V. As to the question of the evacuation of Army Group, North by sea, raised by the Naval Liaison Officer at the Army General Staff (1/SK1 2780 Chefs. in War Diary, Part _____ (Tr.N.: the blank space appears in the German original), Chief, Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Shipping and Transport Branch as Chief of Sea Transport for the Armed Forces makes the following response:

1. Assumption: Evacuation of personnel without equipment, weapons and horses, making use of all suitable ships of the Navy, Evacuation of 520,000 men is possible within about five weeks. Prerequisites: No enemy attacks on harbors and ships and well-timed arrival at the ports. Supplies for army Group, North will have to be reduced to one half of present amount.
2. For the vacuation of units mentioned in B-Nr. 329/44 Gkdos. Chefs. 2nd copy of 7 Sept. 1944 under a,b,c, about eight weeks will be necessary; same prerequisites as to 1.
3. If the evacuation includes all the equipment belonging to the division about five months will be necessary. Prerequisites: curtailment of supplies to at least one half during the time of the evacuation, no enemy attacks and sufficient escort.
4. In this connection, attention is called to the extremely high consumption of fuel oil by the transporters and their absence for other naval operations. It is assumed that sufficient fuel is not available at all for the operations mentioned under 2 and 3, since the fuel needed by the defense forces must also be considered.

VI. By order of Armed Forces High Command, the Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters has asked whether there exists a possibility for sending a submarine to Japan by way of the northern route. Examination of this question by Naval Staff, Submarine Division at an earlier date revealed that this is impossible. The renewed inquiry will be answered by Naval Staff, Submarine Division, Chief of Submarine Operations.

VII. According to an agent report, feverish preparations are being made in Sweden for the defense of the northern border against a Russian advance into the Haparanda area. In addition to the troops, 10,000 men, already present; more formations are said to be on their way. On the Torneo a defense line is being constructed at great speed by strong forces.

Radio interception has confirmed the presence of air force command staffs in northern Sweden.

8 Sept. 1944

VIII. Intercepted radic messages during the week of 28 Aug. to 3 Sept. are filed in XB-Report 36/44 (War Diary D 8e).

IX. Bureau of Naval Armaments, War Economy Branch has sent out two informative statements about the German raw material situation. The first one deals with the supply of iron ore and says that the ore stores in Greater Germany will last for at least three months even if no further supplies are received. Additional supply of high grade iron ore from Skandinavia is of primary importance, since the share of low-phosphorus ore, important for the manufacture of arms, amounts to about two thirds. Without deliveries from Skandinavia, the German pig-iron production would drop to about one fourth once the stores are used up. The intended increase in German ore mining could only furnish a poor substitute. To this the Admiral on Special Duty remarks that this information conflicts with the report of 3 Sept. 1944 by Reich Minister Speer to the Commander in Chief, Navy, according to which the stores and the deposits of iron ore within the German Reich would cover the full demand of the German armaments for the entire year 1945.

The second document deals with all raw materials and the conclusion is reached that the course of the war has brought about an extra-ordinary tension in the supply situation, and that scarcities will be everywhere. In reply the Admiral on Special Duty remarks that Reich Minister Speer reported to the Commander in Chief, Navy that the raw materials within the German home area would suffice to carry out the entire armament program till the beginning of 1946.

A memorandum by Reich Minister Speer on this matter will be submitted to the Commander in Chief, Navy after completion.

Situation 8 Sept. 1944

I. - Situation West Area.

1. Enemy Situation:

Air Reconnaissance of the 15th Group was very extensive, the activity of the 19th Group moderate; somewhat more intense than in the evening.

Since 6 Sept. a regular courier and mail service has been started between Cherbourg and British ports, Since 7 Sept. a new blind broadcasting service has become apparent in the

8 Sept. 1944

home area which bears the symptoms of former Churchill journeys. British vessels were located at 0313 in BE 1646, at 0941 in BE 2187, at 0949 in AM 5360 and at 0958 in AM 5390.

2. Own Situation:

A. Encircled Fortresses:

Brest: During the night of 6 Sept. the strong point Le Conquet was supplied by sea as planned; wounded were removed.

The temporarily disabled three guns of Battery "Graf Spee" are again ready for action.

The Fortress Commander reported in the morning that a battalion of the enemy temporarily broke into the west sector of Le Conquet but was compelled to withdraw again as the result of a counterattack. In the eastern part of the fortress all attacks were repulsed; the enemy suffered high casualties. The main defense line is firmly in our hand.

During the night of 7 Sept. four supply planes dropped anti-tank weapons and medical supplies.

Lorient: The enemy continued his lively air reconnaissance over the entire fortress area. The enemy artillery fire was less than on previous days as the enemy was forced to move his gun positions farther to the rear after being combatted by light range finding.

St. Nazaire: The fortress was supplied by one plane during the night. The personnel of the 10th Minesweeper Flotilla, reinforced by parts of other flotillas, was put into action on the south shore with four to five companies, and on the north shore with five companies.

Four submarine chasers occupied the patrol positions off Lorient; the tanker MARY sailed from Lorient to St. Nazaire escorted by four armed fishing vessels.

No new reports were received from La Rochelle and Gironde. At night four planes dropped supplies over La Rochelle.

B. - Withdrawal Movements:

The motorized column "Paul" coming from the Bourges area arrived in Strassburg with 1,000 men. The 8th Manning Division

8 Sept. 1944

transferred with 600 men from Besancon to Belfort.

The Staff of Admiral, French South Coast began his transfer from Mar Villers to Muensingen. So far about 2,000 naval personnel arrived at the directing center Leitersweiler. Naval Shore Commander, Languedoc arrived at Muelhausen on 8 Sept. with 1,800 men after by-passing Belfort. Admiral Schulte-Moenting is being considered for the position as commander of the intercepting camp Muensingen. 1,300 men of the Navy were intercepted in Belfort by 8 Sept.; the specialists were sent on.

Channel:

Strong enemy air activity took place over Le Havre and Boulogne without special occurrence. The blocking of the harbor and destruction of Calais were carried out with the exception of the bridges and canal locks still needed.

Nieuport was occupied by 25 tanks and strong enemy infantry forces.

Both radar sets at Ostend were blown up. The entire personnel and the Port Commander are retreating.

Scheldt crossings:

The ferrying traffic started in the Scheldt estuary under the command of the Commander of the 1st Defense Division, Captain Knuth, achieved good results till 7 Sept. By 1600, 25,000 men, 550 motor vehicles and 250 tons of equipment had been transferred to Walcheren. The traffic takes the following routes:

Breskens - Flushing
Terneuzen - Hoedeken - Serke
Terneuzen - Flushing.

Reserve routes are provided and further possibilities are being exploited. After the ferry traffic had to be interrupted temporarily on 7 Sept. due to the southwest gale, it was again resumed at 1900.

The harbor installation at Zeebrugge including the break-water were destroyed. The battery crews were put into the front lines. The radar set Knocke was destroyed.

A naval intercepting camp was set up in Flushing.

8 Sept. 1944

II. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

The withdrawal of naval forces from the west area is being continued as follows:

The 8th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla from Helder to Harlingen, the 14th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla from Amsterdam to Delfzijl, the 38 Minesweeper Flotilla, Group E from Helder to Terschelling, the 38th Minesweeper Flotilla, group J from Helder to Harlingen.

The 34th Minesweeper Flotilla, Group A is transferring from Maassluis to Flushing.

The storm in the Heligoland Bight prevented the occupation of the patrol positions; the two harbor defense vessels DW "43" and "44" is in distress since the evening of 7 Sept. were brought to Heligoland with tug assistance.

The Elbe - Weser and Elbe - Ens traffic could be carried out

The Commanding Admiral, North Sea issued a summary as per Gkdos. 6803 about the number of Hansa steamers returned from Holland, (War Diary, Part _____). (The blank space appears in the German original. - Tr.N.). Arrived at home ports since 1 Aug.: the steamers WESERSTEIN, BENNE, LUDWIGSHAFEN, HENDRIK VISSER 5, HENDRIK VISSER 6, MUNGO and WILHELM-SHAVEN. At present on their way: EICHBERG, WISCHHAFEN, HUELVA and CALLIOPE.

Eleven more steamers, either newly constructed or repaired, are on their way; a rather larger number, however, is still in Rotterdam and Amsterdam. These will be transferred as soon as weather conditions permit. Additional ships can be expected.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

In the morning of 7 Sept. air reconnaissance observed a large freighter at Thorshaven (Farøer) and two small freighters near the island group on course 160°.

Hammerfest located British vessels at 2215 in 242° and at 2240 in 208°.

8 Sept. 1944

Own Situation:

A coastal mine formation dropped 160 coastal mines "A" near Lister. At 2018 a submarine alert was given at Haugesund. Slight enemy air activity against our convoys.

III. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

1. Enemy Situation:

According to a report by agent Ostrow, the resumption of blockade-running by British PT boats to western Sweden is being contemplated. During the year ten fast motor coasters are supposed to have been made available which are not only to be used for transporting important goods from Sweden but also for reconnoitering purposes in connection with planned operations in the Skagerrak and Kattegat. These boats are manned by personnel of the Royal Navy. The first operation presumably is to take place in the beginning of October.

No special reports were received about the enemy situation in the Gulf of Finland.

2. Own Situation:

Admiral, Skagerrak:

The patrol position: western Jutland was not occupied due to weather conditions.

The avisic HELA with the Commanding Admiral, Fleet aboard arrived in Copenhagen on 7 Sept. Convoys were carried out as planned.

Central and Western Baltic:

The minesweeping assignment to be carried out by 41 boats was partially interrupted due to the weather situation. One mine each was swept in the Irben Straits, Off Pillau in the Koenigsberg Sea Canal and in the Diel Bay.

Admiral, Eastern Baltic:

The patrol of Narva was carried out by two minesweeper boats and one anti-aircraft chaser. Four submarines were in the operational area.

8 Sept. 1944

The minesweepers M "18", "29" and "30" sailed from Kotka to Reval to take aboard cargo for operation "Seeteufel" (reinforcement of operation "Seeigel").

At daybreak the troop transports DONAU and SUMATRA sailed from Helsinki to Danzig with the 303rd Gun Brigade aboard. At 1445 the vessels received orders to sail for Reval, at 1800 for Riga.

Last night the mine barrage "Seeigel" Xb was laid as planned.

The 1st Minesweeper Flotilla sailed for Reval and the 8th Minelaying Naval Ferry Barges for Loksa.

On 7 Sept. 4,968 tons of supply were transported to Reval for Army Group, North.

An extensive correspondence has been carried on about the treatment of Finnish merchant ships, since the orders issued so far, were partly contradictory and incomplete. On 7 Sept. Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division ordered among other things that all Finnish ships used by Germans shall remain at the disposal of Germany in the future; all ships carrying supplies and fuel are to be directed to sail immediately for Riga there to be placed at the disposal of Army Group, North. On 8 Sept. Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Shipping and Transport Branch again informed the Seatransport Office Helsinki and Admiral, Eastern Baltic that because of the scarcity of German tonnage, the use of Finnish ships is urgently needed. Every guarantee must be given to the Finns for the return of their ships.

The difficulties in this matter have, without doubt arisen as the result of our retention of Finnish ships in the German sphere of influence under certain pretexts; the demands for the release of these ships are steadily becoming more urgent. Naval Command, Norway therefore inquires in the evening whether the ships should, in case of an emergency, be retained by armed forces. In the reply of the same evening as per 27833/44 Gkdos, Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division calls again attention to the order of the Armed Forces High Command and states that according to paragraph 3 of this order, no force should be used prior to confiscation. The order of the Armed Forces High Command referred to, reads as follows:

Concerning: Treatment of Finnish ships.

1. Upon request, ships loaded with German evacuation equipment are to be given every guarantee that they will be allowed to return to Finland after having carried out their missions.

8 Sept. 1944

2. In addition, the Reich Commissar for Shipping and Director of Sea Transport for the Armed Forces will route Finnish ships in such a way that the highest possible number of Finnish ships will be in the German sphere of influence on 15 Sept.

3. Confiscation of these ships is to be prepared inconspicuously. A special order to execute seizure will be issued by the Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff in agreement with the Foreign Office depending on political developments.

Appendix:

1. Details to 1 and 2 will be ordered by Naval Staff, Quarter master Division, Shipping and Transport Branch.

2. Inconspicuous preparations according to 3 are to be made by the Naval Commands. Information to the lower commands before receipt of executive orders can be given only with permission of Naval Staff.

IV. Submarine Warfare.

A submarine (Lt. Rodler) returning from the occupation area Channel reported the sinking of 5,000 BRT and the torpedoing of 7,000 BRT. The boat met with strong north-south traffic and with rigid patrol in the waters north of Cherbourg. According to monitored telephone traffic a ship of the convoy formation AN was torpedoed at 0747 probably off the North Channel. Submarine "995" reported the execution of the mine task Yuger Straits.

The last three German submarines in the Black Sea receive detailed instruction by Naval Staff, Submarine Division.

V. Aerial Warfare.

1. West Area:

Lively fighter-bomber and air reconnaissance activity took place in the Dutch-Belgian area. Fifty fighter-bombers entered the Alsation area and attacked airfields and railroads.

2. Reich Territory:

8 Sept. 1944

During the day strong fighter-bomber activity took place in the area of Aachen, Essen, Frankfurt-Main, Jena, Schweinfurt and Muehlhausen; numerous attacks on railroads and places in the Rhine area.

At 0950 800 heavy bombers with fighter escort passed the coast and by way of Belgium flew over southern Germany, attacking Karlsruhe, Mannheim, Ludwigshafen, Mainz, Worms and Wiesbaden. Damage was caused in all places, especially in Karlsruhe to railroad installations, in Mannheim to industrial installations and the harbor (18 ships damaged) and in Ludwigshafen to industrial work.

By night 80 Mosquitoes raided Nuernberg.

3. Mediterranean Theater:

Lively enemy air activity over the Balkans. 30 planes supplied the partisans during the night.

Over the Italian front 110 enemy planes concentrated their attacks on the Adriatic coast.

4. Eastern Front:

443 own and 1215 enemy flights were reported; one plane was lost and 14 shot down.

5. Norwegian Coast:

At 1300 35 enemy planes were over the waters of Stavanger. One Norwegian freighter was set afire by an attack with bombs, rockets and gunfire.

VI. Mediterranean Theater.

1. Western Mediterranean:

During the night convey and defense tasks were carried out as planned; 34 more coastal mines "A" were planted off Carrara.

During the night of 7 Sept. five German and three Italian assault boats were in action on the southern French coast. Torpedoes fired at observed cruisers and destroyers missed their targets. The boats met with strong defense and were

8 Sept. 1944

chased doggedly by numerous gun boats. Two boats were damaged and beached; no casualties.

2. Adriatic Sea:

At noon two destroyers laid harassing fire on Rimini. Lively air reconnaissance was carried out over the Gulf of Trieste; at 1130 eight fighter-bombers attacked the steamer REX near Capodistria. The ship, set ablaze by several hits, sank after two hours.

Last night the mopping-up operation along the south coast of the island of Hvar was carried out as planned; the three PT boats participating as escort returned to Split.

The searching for nonregistered vessels in central Dalmatia was successful. Eleven vessels were seized in Split, 31 in Trogir and 47 in Dubrovnik. In addition 14 vessels were taken in Gruz, 30 in Bascovada and 15 in Markarska; in all 148 small vessels.

On 7 Sept. at 2115 our PT boats attacked a vessel resembling a corvet northwest of Dubrovnik without success. No defense.

The torpedo boat TA "45" was commissioned on 6 Sept.

3. Aegean Sea:

At 0900 two British officers appeared on Kephallonia and demanded the surrender of the island without resistance.

The island Commander made an indefinite reply in order to gain time. Army Group E orders that the surrender offer be rejected and demands that the island be defended to the very end. Local defense measures were taken in Greece since the partisans with enemy support are expected to start a major revolt during the night of 8 Sept.

At 0110 the submarine chaser "2142" fought two submarines 15 miles south of Santorin and forced them to submerge after prolonged gunfire.

According to the "Leander" report of 7 Sept. by Admiral, Aegean Sea the measures for the dispersal of troops on the Peloponnesos and on the islands are being carried out as planned. A considerable improvement in the supply situation on the continent resulted from the discontinuance of supplying the islands.

8 Sept. 1944

4. Danube Situation:

The channel markings of the rapids were removed by the Rumanians and the Greben Canal was blocked by a scuttled towing vessel. The water level is very low.

All naval units in Prahovo were put under command of the Combat Commander. The vessels of Group "Stelter" were put into action near Prahovo as floating batteries. Their ammunition stores are very low.

The patrol boat ZAGREB which had a Croatian crew but German radio and sailing personnel, was found plundered at km 1262. The Croatian crew probably revolted and took the Germans prisoner.

The code was apparently revealed as it was found later.

9 Sept. 1944

Items of Political Importance.

Events in Bulgaria are moving rapidly. After the Commander in Chief of the Russian Forces in Bulgaria had directed a long appeal to the Bulgarian nation and army, in which he set forth his demands, the Bulgarian provisional government headed by Muravieff declared over the radio in a Russian and Bulgarian language broadcast that it would accept all demands and is willing to start armistice negotiations at once.

Already in the afternoon of 9 Sept. Radio Bucharest announced that on the initiative of the "Fatherland Front" a new government was formed with Georgieff as Prime Minister, which will adhere to the same friendly allied policy as the former cabinet.

The Bulgarian National Assembly was dissolved and the most important military commanders were removed from their posts. All organizations with allegedly national-socialist and fascist tendencies were dissolved. Numerous officials in foreign countries were ordered to return to Bulgaria.

All major newspapers of the British press devote much space to the new situation on the Balkan Peninsula and try to create the impression that Russia was given a free hand there.

The Belgian Prime Minister in exile, Pierlot arrived in Brussels accompanied by all members of the government and addressed the Belgian nation in a proclamation.

According to a report from Ankara the Rumanian Minister Manui announced the Russian armistice terms as follows:

1. Bessarabia and the Bukowina are ceded to Russia;
2. Rumania permits the unhindered passing of Russian forces and puts all her transport means at the disposal of the Russians;
3. Russia will have control over an unlimited part of Fumania for the duration of military operations;
4. Russia acknowledges that the Vienna arbitration was unjust and will support the claims of Rumania in regard to Transylvania.

The military developments on the Balkan Peninsula have caused the partisan leader Tito to issue an order of the day to the Jugoslavs; the Ex-prime Minister Benes made a radio speech to the Czecho-Slovakian people.

9 Sept. 1944

According to statements made by Roosevelt, the Dumbarton Oaks conference has made excellent progress and is approaching its end. The first conflict is said to have arisen between the de Gaulle-Government and the resistance movement as the result of a government resolution aimed at the discontinuation of all command organizations of the FFI and the enrollment of the members of the FFI in the de Gaulle army.

Conference on the Situation with the Commander in Chief, Navy at 1145 in the Presence of the Commanding Admiral, Group South.

I. Naval Staff, Chief of Operations Branch reports on the new regulations issued by the Armed Forces High Command for "ARIZ" measures (Measures for dispersal, evacuation, paralyzing and demolition).

II. Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division points out that already now a considerable increase is noticeable as far as the supplies for Norwegian ports are concerned.

All these questions must be checked carefully and are at present being examined on the basis of need and available shipping space by Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Shipping and Transport Branch. The result of this investigation will entail important decisions.

III. Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division reports further that the transportation situation in Greece has become absolutely hopeless after the destruction of the Danube bridges near Belgrade and as the result of the internal situation in Greece and Serbia. There is not the slightest possibility that transports will reach the south-eastern area.

All of the Italian border crossings are at present destroyed. Railroad cars have become very scarce in Reich territory. The following priorities were established for evacuation transports:
1. fuel, 2. ammunition.

IV. Chief, Bureau of Naval Administration reports that he has placed at the disposal of the Reichsfuehrer SS (Himmler, Tr. N.) all foreign volunteers serving in the Navy. The Commander in Chief, Navy welcomes this measure.

9 Sept. 1944

V. Naval Staff, Chief of Naval Intelligence reports that the Regent Filoff has also resigned.

Conference in a Restricted Circle.

VI. Army Situation.

Western Front:

The 15th Army, according to plan, succeeded in fighting its way back into the Zeebrugge - Bruges - Gent - Stekene - Scheldt Estuary bridgehead. The enemy evidently has shifted part of his forces towards the fortresses Calais and Dunkirk.

Near Antwerp the enemy attacked from his bridgehead and was repulsed. Near Beeringen the enemy succeeded in extending his bridgehead to Beverloo - Hechtel. Our counterattack led to compressing the bridgehead; the enemy suffered high casualties.

The elimination of the enemy positions east of the Albert Canal near Antwerp, Gheel and Beeringen is contemplated for 9 Sept.

The Situation in front of the sector of the 7th Army took another unfavorable turn. Since last night a heavy tank attack is taking place against the fortress Liege. Fort Eben Emael was occupied by one of our replacement battalions. South of Liege the enemy pushed forward into the area of Verviers.

The enemy was able to achieve several penetrations of the weak defense line south of the Meuse. The Moselle was reached and crossed in several places farther south.

At the 19th Army Command, the enemy attempts to harass the withdrawal movement on the western front by light tank forces.

The attack of the 4th Air Force Field Corps for the purpose of mopping up of the enemy bridgehead west of Besacon was discontinued.

The enemy has put all available divisions (four) into action on the east flank outdistancing our retreating troops moving in the direction of Belfort. The enemy is opposed by only light and battle weary forces.

According to the Army, all depends upon reaching a more narrow bridgehead position around Belfort.

9 Sept. 1944

Italian Front:

In the sector of Army Liguria the enemy did not continue his attacks. Alpine fighting near the passes has to be reckoned with.

Yesterday, too, the enemy followed the withdrawal movements of the 14th Army to the Gothic line only hesitatingly.

The enemy restricted his attacks on the Adriatic coast again to a limited area, probably due to the high casualties suffered on the foregone days. In successful and dogged fighting all attacks were repulsed, in one place six times.

Eastern Front:

Army Group Southern Ukraine:

The Russians are entering eastern Bulgaria on a broad front and occupied Varna without meeting resistance.

Reconnaissance results over western Rumania were not received. An advance of the enemy on Belgrade must be expected. Apparently strong Russian forces are advancing northward through the southern Carpathian Mountains and have reached Nagy-Szeben.

The Bulgarian army of occupation in Serbia is retreating to the east. It is no longer our intention to prevent the retreat. The artillery, heavy arms, and the supply depots are to be turned over to us.

The attack of the 2nd Hungarian army south of Cluj was discontinued at the Small Kokel.

North of Brassó the enemy achieved deep penetrations which forced us to take back our front line.

The alternating combats in the eastern Carpathian Mountains are being continued.

The enemy attacked with superior forces in numerous places between Sanok and Debika and achieved penetrations. Counter-measures were started. Whether this is the initial phase of a major attack against the Beskides, has to be seen.

Army Group Center and North:

The extraordinary severe fighting between Warsaw and Ostrolenka was restricted to the bridgeheads, which the

9 Sept. 1944

Russians are attempting to extend. Major successes for the enemy were prevented. German reinforcements are arriving.

No combat activity of importance was reported from other parts of the front.

VII. Naval Staff, Operations Division, Chief of Operations Branch answered yesterday's question by the Commander in Chief, Navy about the use of pressure magnet mines in the Scheldt by stating that these were used primarily.

VIII. The extensive report on the situation submitted by the Naval Liaison Officer on the island Hogland was brought to the attention of Commander in Chief, Navy. He thereupon ordered that the entire report be relayed to the Armed Forces High Command. One copy of this important report was filed in the War Diary, Part C. Volume III. The most important part of it is the declaration made by the Finnish commander of the island saying that he would never give orders to shoot at German soldiers, not even by orders of his superiors. If it should be necessary to feign fighting to the Russians, he might issue orders to shoot over German ships or would start firing after the German troops have reached the shore. In conclusion the Naval Liaison Officer states that as the result of his discussions with the Island Commander, he is now positively convinced that Hogland would be handed over to the German troops without resistance.

IX. No positive information was received about the fate of the German Naval Mission Rumania and Admiral Tillesen. Ostensibly Admiral Tillesen was taken away by the Russians.

X. Naval Staff, Operations Division, Chief of Operations Branch reports that discussions are taking place with the Commander, PT Boats about future actions of PT boats from home ports, from Jutland and from Norway. The Commander in Chief, Navy emphasizes that the present situation does not demand such transfers, that the most important task at the moment is the retaining of operation bases for PT boats in Holland.

Special Items.

I. In answer to the question raised by Naval Staff, Operations

9 Sept. 1944

Division as per 2670/44 Gkdos. Chfs. on 31 Aug. concerning the blocking of the Sound, Naval Command Baltic reported on 6 Sept. as follows:

- "1. Blocking of Sound-North has only nuisance value and is effective only if the mine barrage includes Swedish territorial waters up to the Swedish coast.
2. Information is requested about allocation of barrage equipment for October and the amount thereof."

Naval Staff, Operations Division replied on 9 Sept. as follows:

"It is too early to make commitments with regard to allocation of barrage equipment for October. It is planned to allocate about 500 EMC mines for the Gulf of Finland, about 600 EMC mines, 500 EMF mines and 300 EMR mines for Skagerrak, and 700 LMB mines for the Jutland coast."

II. Copy of statement by Commander, PT Boats on further combat possibilities of PT Boats (Commander PT Boats "Gkdos 50/44" of 8.9.) was filed in War Diary, Part C, Volume IIa (see also Conference on the Situation, X.)

III. The following teletype message "1/Skl 27743/44 Gkdos" is sent to the Army General Staff and a copy to Armed Forces High Command:

"Naval Command Baltic requests that Memel be made into a fortress and reports that the General of the Engineers, Central Army Group attaches great importance to it. A directive to Central Army Group is requested declaring Memel a fortified place. Naval Staff assumes that the fortress Memel is to be included in the East Prussian border defense line."

IV. The mine situation in the Baltic Sea and the frequent closing of the submarine training area in the Danzig Bay make known the danger that the systematic trial runs of the new types of submarines, to start on an increased scale on 15 Sept., cannot be carried out.

An extended correspondence about this situation has developed between the Commanding Admiral, Submarines, Naval Command Baltic and Naval Staff, Operations Division.

Naval Command Baltic will have to make use of all possibilities for the discharge of this important task. A certain, to be sure, limited number of additional clearance vessels is being set aside for this purpose.

9 Sept. 1944

V. Naval Command Baltic receives as per "1/Skl 27691/44 Gkdos." the approval for the planned mine barrages "Seepferd" and "Seeteufel" as well as the information that the decision about the execution of operation "Tanne Ost" has not yet been made.

VI. The Fleet Command submitted as per "Gkdos. 6290" a survey about the possibilities of transporting troops on ships of the fleet. A copy of the survey has been filed in War Diary _____. (The blank space appears in the original. - Tr.N.).

VII. In compliance with the new directive issued by the Armed Forces High Command about destructions in the home area, Naval Command Baltic has issued a supplementary order as per "Gkdos. 205157 Q.Qu.", according to which only plans for the destruction of harbor installations and bridges in the Baltic ports are to be made. The Commanding Admiral, Central Coast receives instructions to check in conjunction with the Army, in the command areas of the Acting General of the 1st and 20th Army Corps to what extent preparations, exceeding present plans, should be made in regard to other naval installations.

Situation 9 Sept.

I. Situation West Area.

1. Enemy Situation:

Lively air reconnaissance was carried out by the 15th and 19th Group with several ASV locations, one probably in the western Channel. The usual radio locations of enemy vessels were made.

At 1715 13 rather large ships were observed from the Dunkirk lighthouse on westerly course at a distance of 15 miles.

In the afternoon of 8 Sept. 15 Liberty freighters, three LST's and two escort boats were sighted from the Channel Islands in BF 3528, course 180°. At 1900 22 freighters and nine LST's with one escort boat were in the same square on northerly course. A few light naval vessels were at night located by radar.

2. Own Situation:

A. Encircled Fortresses Western France;

Brest: The Fortress Commander Brest, Lieutenant General Ramke, has in extensive reports explained the situation which existed at the time when he took over the command.

9 Sept. 1944

These reports show clearly that confusion was reigning in the command posts of the army after the enemy broke through near Avranches. The confusion was responsible for the stupid and often contradictory orders which followed one another in quick succession.

The supply situation in the fortress has become difficult due to the fact that the supplies were originally meant to fill only the needs of the defense force. It was not taken into consideration that many more soldiers would be assigned to the fortress area.

Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Organization and Mobilization Branch submits this information to the Armed Forces High Command for considerations with regard to other fortresses.

Heavy fighting around the fortress Brest continued on 8 Sept. The main defense line and the combat area in its entire depth were under violent artillery fire. The enemy regrouped his combat troops against the Le Conquet sector. The western part of the fortress was held with dogged persistence and by severe counterthrusts. The enemy suffered high casualties.

The Naval Shore Commander in continuing the mining of the naval harbor. Battery "Graf Spee" was put out of action as the result of artillery shelling and fighter-bomber attacks. Its crew of 105 men is fighting in the main defense line.

At noon the batteries "Graf Spee" and "Holtzendorff" after being blown up were occupied by the enemy.

On 9 Sept. at 1825 the fortress commander reported that the Le Conquet sector was lost after heroic fighting. All heavy arms and installations were battered up by bomb carpets and artillery shelling. The remnants of the crew are fighting on after the destruction of the communication lines.

Lorient: Combat with terrorists took place south of Nostang in the course of lively scouting activity.

St. Nazaire: According to a report by the Commander of the 6th PT Flotilla, in all 2,550 men of the Commanding Admiral, Defenses West are used for ground combat. The following guns were turned over to the Army: 20 - 10.5 cm, 4 - 8.8 cm, 30 - 3.7 cm and 170 - 2 cm. Likewise all small arms and 500 tons of ammunition were ceded to the land forces. Fourteen defense vessels are still in operation with a crew of 650 men.

9 Sept. 1944

La Rochelle: Today, requisitioning of foodstuffs from the surrounding country side was carried out successfully. Last night one plane dropped five supply containers.

Gironde: Today's demand to surrender was refused. Bazookas and newspapers were dropped by supply planes according to plan.

B. Withdrawal Movements, Southern France:

According to a report by Naval Liaison Officer of the 64th Army Corps there are still about 5,000 naval personnel between Poitiers and Dijon.

Channel Coast:

At 0908 Battery "Bluecher" on Alderney shelled four LST's one freighter and one escort boat on southeasterly course in 3519. No hits were observed.

The northern part of the fortress Le Havre was attacked by about 150 four-engined planes. Our anti-aircraft defense was weak, because the guns were being shelled by artillery at the same time. The city itself is still afire since the 1st air raid on 5 Sept. despite rain.

Boulogne and Calais were subjected to light artillery shelling. Our guns fought enemy concentrations near Guines. Gravelines was lost; the city Nieuport was evacuated by the enemy and retaken by us after shelling by our army coast artillery.

In the Belgium the 15th Army has now fought its way back to the Zeebrugge - Bruges - Gent - Stekene - Scheldt Estuary bridgehead according to plan. 6,500 soldiers - among them many wounded - 488 motor vehicles, 44 guns, many horses and additional army goods were ferried across the Scheldt.

II. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea.

Our tasks were today again partially restricted due to weather conditions. In the afternoon 20 to 25 enemy planes with fighters were over the convoy routes between Wangerooge and Heligoland without carrying out attacks.

9 Sept. 1944

Three Hansa ships and the tanker MEMELLAND were transferred from Helder to Borkum protected by nine escort boats according to plan.

The steamer WEISCHSEL of convoy 1273 Hook of Holland - Ymuiden was, in the course of several fighter bombers attacks, damaged by a nearby bomb hit. One plane was downed.

Last night at 2300 the trawler ELBE hit the wreck of the lightship "E" and sank. The transfer of the defense formations from the West Area through the Dutch canals was continued on 9 Sept.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Slight air activity was carried out by 20 enemy planes of the 18th Group. An air picture of the naval harbor Poljarnoje taken on 7 Sept. confirmed the presence of one submarine of the K-Class, one submarine of the M-Class, five submarines of the D - or L-Class and one escort boat.

Own Situation:

In the afternoon and evening of 7 Sept. lively shelling took place on both sides in the Petsamo area. One man of the Battery "Sensenhauer" was killed. On 8 Sept. 20 planes attacked the Battery Murmansetti. At 1543 an enemy reconnaissance plane observed the mooring places in Alta.

One mine detonation occurred in AC 8484. At 1815 on 8 Sept. Radar Draskenes observed an unknown submarine on northerly course. Slight enemy air activity was carried out along the southwestern Norwegian coast.

Air Force, Operations Staff again reported that an attack on the photographed battleship in the Valjenga Bay is not possible since our bomber formations had to be inactivated on account of the fuel situation.

The reconnaissance planes and fighters stationed in northern Norway are unsuited for such an attack. The transfer of additional forces to the north is not possible due to the general situation.

Naval Command Norway is being informed as per "1/Skl 27952".

Air Force, Operations Staff reports furthermore that the Chief, General Staff has approved the flight of a BV 222 plane for the purpose of bringing an automatic weather station.

9 Sept. 1944

to the Polar Sea. The 5th Air Force will receive the proper order. The necessary fuel is to be saved by eliminating several weather flights to Jan Mayen.

III. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

1. Enemy Situation:

At 1500 four Russian boats were observed ten miles northwest of Volaste presumably engaged in minesweeping operations. The Russian radio communications were of no special significance.

2. Own Situation:

Admiral, Skagerrak:

In the afternoon of 7 Sept. the catapult ship WESTFALEN of the Air Force, which was being used for transporting personnel on leave between Oslo and Denmark, was lost on the Swedish coast. The first report given out by the Naval Attache Stockholm said that a Swedish destroyer northwest of Vinga observed that the ship struck two mines and sank. Sixty men were rescued by the Swedish destroyer and by two other vessels sent by the Swedish Navy; five more men were saved by pilot boats. The crew was said to have been about 250 men.

At 2215 Naval Command Baltic submitted a report by the 8th Defense Division that the ship was no longer with the convoy in the morning of 8 Sept.; she evidently had not been able to keep up speed at night in the very heavy sea. The escorting torpedoboat "156" which was hindered in her maneuverability by the extraordinarily heavy weather (southern gale up to strength 11), first brought the rest of the convoy to Frederikshaven and requested Radio Naval Communications Officer, Ruegen to relay to the WESTFALEN the instruction that she should continue along to Frederikshaven Roads.

When the WESTFALEN had not arrived in Frederikshavn the morning of 9 Sept. patrol vessels in "Black 06A" and "Black 14" were asked about the passing of the ship. No results. Location signals were not answered by the WESTFALEN.

We must await the report by the convoy commander.

9 Sept. 1944

Central and Western Baltic:

Minesweeping was carried out by 35 boats and by one mine exploding vessel.

Admiral. Eastern Baltic:

Four submarines were in the operational area. Narva patrol, submarine hunt and the guarding of net barrages were carried out as planned.

Extensive evacuations from Finland as well as supplying of Army Group North took place according to plan. On 8 Sept. 1,717 tons of supply arrived in Riga.

IV. Submarine Warfare.

On 9 Sept. the last boat, submarine U "155" left Lorient for Norway.

Submarine U "862" arrived in Penang on 9 Sept. and reported the sinking of a coal steamer (5,500 BRT) on 13 Aug. a freighter (8,000 BRT) on 16 Aug., an ammunition steamer (5,500 BRT) on 18 Aug., and a freighter (5,300 BRT) on 19 Aug. All ships were on a northerly course.

Submarine U "636" reports from the Arctic Ocean execution of the mine task in the Barents Sea. All planned barrages have thus been laid there.

Submarine U "703", which escorted the weather ship KEHDINGEN with the weather detachment to Greenland, reports arrival in Narvik.

Submarine U "307"2, which is to rejoin the weather ship BUSCH with the weather detachment to Alexandra Land, has departed from Hammerfest.

Submarines U "293" and U "310" transferred from Group Center to Commander, Submarines Norway. The Group Center will consist of twelve boats.

In the Mediterranean submarine U "407" is in its operational area north of Crete.

In the Black Sea the last three submarines were scuttled off the Turkish coast.

9 Sept. 1944

V. Aerial Warfare.

1. Western Area:

By day lively fighter-bomber and reconnaissance activity took place in the Belgian-Dutch area with attacks on road objectives.

One hundred and twenty fighter-bombers and fighters entered the Dijon area and attacked gun positions and likewise road objectives. The enemy activity during the night was slight; no attacks were made.

2. Reich Territory:

By day 380 enemy planes were in the Rhine area and west of Kassel carrying out gunfire attacks.

Beginning at 0930 several hundred bombers with fighter escort passed the Scheldt estuary in two groups flying in the direction of the Reich. One group carried out bomb attacks in the area of Duesseldorf - Siegen - Koeln; about 120 to 150 of these planes attacked Duesseldorf (industrial installations). - The second group entered the area of Wiesbaden - Wuertzburg - Mannheim and dropped bombs concentrating its attacks on Mannheim (heavy damage to industry and railroads) as well as on Ludwigshafen, Worms and Mainz. No fighter defense. Fifteen planes were definitely shot down by anti-aircraft artillery, four others were probably lost. During the night slight activity along the North Sea coast and at 2300 an attack on Brunswick by 40 to 50 Mosquitoes causing damage to industry and buildings.

3. Mediterranean Theater:

Three enemy reconnaissance planes flew over the Balkan area; ten planes over the Serbian - Croatian area.

Three hundred and fifty planes with fighter escort entered the Brod area from southern Italy by way of the Adriatic Sea and attacked the city and airfield of Sarajewo as well as the Save bridges and the city of Belgrade. Nish was again attacked and the Air Force ground organization at Banat, where 92 planes were destroyed. Anti-aircraft artillery downed three enemy planes.

On the Italian front the enemy air force was concentrating its attacks along the Adriatic coast; in southern France 140 enemy flights were observed.

9 Sept. 1944

At night 49 planes - among them 19 Russian planes - supplied the partisans on the Balkan Peninsula .

4. East Area:

On 8 Sept. 320 own and 1280 enemy flights were carried out. We lost one plane; two enemy planes were shot down.

VI. Warfare in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

1. Area of German Naval Command Italy:

Enemy Situation:

On 8 Sept. at 1500 a British battleship of the R-Class entered Gibraltar coming from the Mediterranean. Today at 1015 a convoy consisting of 19 freighters, two tankers, three escort vessels, and one submarine left Gibraltar for the Atlantic.

On the French south coast lively supply traffic was confirmed last night by radar and by sight.

Own Situation:

Convoy and defense duties on the Italian west coast had to be stopped owing to weather conditions. Preliminary casualty list shows that 267 Navy men were killed in the air raid on Genoa on 4 Sept.

On the Adriatic coast, Rimini was heavily shelled by several land batteries. The 15cm Battery Rimini-West opened fire on a destroyer and six medium vessels, east of Rimini on northerly course at noon.

2. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

At 0715 the passenger ship SAN MARCO was attacked off Cape Salvore by twelve Spitfires and burned out after being beached. Casualties are considerable. The mine-ship KIEBITZ in conjunction with two torpedoboats laid the mine fields "Murmel 6-10" as planned.

9 Sept. 1944

In the forenoon five coastal defense boats and the flotilla equipment of the 22nd PT Boat Flotilla were turned over to the Croatian Navy.

b. Aegean Sea:

The submarine chaser "2142" sank north of Crete after being attacked by eight planes. The loss of the vessel, so useful for the Aegean Sea, is felt very much. Details are not yet known.

According to a report by the Admiral, Aegean Sea, half of the air radar sets and flight report posts have already been discontinued. Information about air activity has become very incomplete.

High Command, Navy, Quartermaster Division, Organization and Mobilization Branch issued directives as per "Gkdos. 4505" about further activity and treatment of the Naval Offices becoming inactive in the Aegean Sea and on the Balkan Peninsula. The necessary measures must be taken by Group South and are to be reported to Naval Staff.

The Special Naval Operations Unit 20 has distinguished itself in the Thrace and Salonika areas.

c. Danube Situation:

Operation "Donauelfe" is being continued. The infantry spearhead was near Orsova on 9 Sept. Moldova has already been occupied by the Russians; Tito forces are moving in from the west.

No report came in from the Group Prahovo. The personnel of the Group Seatransport Braila has passed Belgrade.

Army Group F orders that Prahovo be defended.

Further mining of the Danube was carried out on 8 Sept. between km 1352 and 1398 as well as between km 1556 and 1587.

On 8 and 9 Sept. nine mines in all were swept by minesweeping vessels. Two losses occurred; one motor ship at km 1228 and one steamship at km 1232. Near km 1227 four towing barges were damaged; one sank.

10 Sept. 1944

Items of Political Importance.

As the result of the new political situation in Bulgaria, Prince Kyrill and General Michoff were suddenly dismissed as regents; the third regent, Professor Filoff, resigned his post beforehand. Three new regents - mere figureheads. - were appointed.

All ministers which held offices since 1 Jan 1941 and all officials which are said to be responsible for the "present catastrophe" are to be arrested.

The names of the members of the new Bulgarian Government were made public.

In France a shift took place in the cabinet de Gaulle; the reason for it is not clear. The Greek exile government transferred to Caserta near Naples.

In connection with the coming military operations in the Far East great political activity, in which the big unknown factor Russia is without doubt of special significance, can be noticed too.

During the parliamentary discussions for the Japanese war aims on 9 Sept. the Japanese Foreign Minister emphasized the identity of the interests of Japan and Russia. He declared that the state of neutrality between Japan and Russia was dictated by mutual interests.

Conference with the Commander in Chief, Navy at 1100.

I. After the Air Force, Operations Staff had to decline action against the enemy battleship in the Wajenga Bay due to lack of forces and fuel, the Commander in Chief, Navy orders that Naval Staff, Submarine Division is to check the possibility of a submarine attack on the battleship.

II. The Chief, Naval Staff contacted the Commanding Admiral, Naval Command North and the Admiral, Netherlands concerning additional measures for the destruction of Antwerp. It has been established that the locks were evidently not destroyed effectively and pointed out to Naval Command North that this must be a chief aim of the Navy.

In order to accomplish close liaison with the Army - this is of special importance due to the quick changes in the situation - Naval Liaison Officers will now be assigned to all Army Commands.

10 Sept. 1944

III. On the basis of experience gained in Cherbourg, detailed plans for the destruction of the harbors Rotterdam and Amsterdam have been made. The extensive work will require eight weeks if the Navy alone has to carry it out; with 500 engineers this could be accomplished in two weeks. The blowing-up could be carried out within 60 hours.

IV. Naval Staff, Operations Division, Chief of Operations Branch reports that the French are attempting to conclude an armistice with the fortress commander of La Rochelle. This matter concerns the Commanding General, West but will likewise be watched carefully by Naval Staff.

Chief, Operations Division also reports that according to an order by the Fuehrer, the Commanding General, West will take over the command of the German western defenses, including the West Wall, with all forces present on 11 Sept. at 0000.

V. Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division submits plans for the intended installation of new coastal batteries on Jutland. The Commander in Chief, Navy agrees.

VI. Naval Staff, Chief of Naval Communications Division reports about the present state of the new installations for transmitting ultra long waves and about the projects for sheltering and construction of the transmitters in the home area. All major transmitters in the western areas had to be abandoned.

In regard to station Narvik, the construction of which is partially completed the Commander in Chief, Navy decides that the need for it is not so urgent as for the indispensable wireless installations in the home area.

VII. Naval Staff, Naval Radar Division reports that the 2nd Radar Detachment (Channel) was disbanded.

VIII. Chief, Bureau of Naval Administration reports that the exchanged prisoners of war arrived in Sassnitz from Goeteborg.

IX. Naval Staff, Chief of Naval Intelligence Division reports about further agent reports concerning landings in northern Europe; he likewise submits information received from the Foreign Office according to which the situation in Hungary is unclear and unsettled. The new Prime Minister Lakatos is said to be reliable. An abundance of reports about conditions there is on hand which, however, cannot be checked.

10 Sept. 1944

In Slovakia, additional Slovak troop formations stopped fighting.

Fighting in Bulgaria is supposed to cease at 2200 on 9 Sept. and the armistice terms are to be worked out jointly by the Allies. Innumerable arrests are being made; the German Embassy was stormed by a mob.

Conference in a Restricted Circle.

Army Situation:

1. Western Front:

The 15th Army was able to continue its tactical assignments according to plan in spite of strong enemy pressure. The enemy formed a small bridgehead across the Gent-Bruges Canal, southeast of Bruges. Since a counter-attack there was not successful, the enemy attack anew. Twice the garrison of Bruges was asked to surrender; no replies were made.

A counterattack is being directed against some enemy tanks which penetrated our lines in the north.

Further Army troops are being ferried across the Scheldt estuary. These operations are hindered by high seas so that only heavy ferries can be operated.

The 21st British Army Group advanced to the Albert Canal. The heaviest fighting was on the Beeringen area, where the reinforced enemy was attempting to force a break-through to the north. He was repulsed. Our attack gained territory and is to be continued until Beeringen and the Albert Canal are again in our hands.

An enemy penetration into field positions of the Fort Eben Emael was wiped out.

In the morning the 12th American Army Group with about two divisions started an attack against the 7th Army in the Liege area. Our considerably weaker forces were able to halt the enemy north of Liege who aimed at the elimination of our Meuse defense. However the enemy's tank thrust in the direction of Aachen, by way of Verviers and north thereof Limbourg, gained territory; there our small tank groups lacking fuel are in combat with superior enemy tanks.

10 Sept. 1944

South of Liege strong enemy forces broke through the lines of our weak combat group. The setting-up of a new defense line on both sides of Theux, northwest of Spa is in the making. Farther to the south our troops withdrew to the Ambleve sector.

Enemy tank attacks in the area northwest of Longwy were intercepted.

The setting-up of a defense position behind the Ognon sector planned by the 19th Army was successful only in the western part of the sector. Our troops considerably weakened by previous fights were not able to prevent enemy penetrations. Rioz and two other villages were lost after hard fighting north of Besancon.

East of Besancon enemy tank forces took possession of the Luxiol area.

Southwest of Belfort the enemy expanded his bridgehead across the Doubs near Clerval.

Enemy attacks were repulsed along the remaining parts of the front down to the Swiss border. Strong enemy motorized columns moving from Besancon to the east and north, give rise to the assumption that the attack will be continued in the direction of Belfort and Vescoul.

Strong concentration of American troops in the area of Southampton, England are reported. There are said to be six divisions. If this should be the case it would signify the withdrawal of all American Army formations from southeast England and indicate a considerable dispersal.

2. Italian Front:

Western Front:

The enemy is not only concentrating opposite the main passes but also opposite some of the minor passes.

Southern Front:

After completing his regrouping, the enemy yesterday continued his major offensive with strong forces attacking in waves. The most bitter fighting took place around Gemmanol. In hard and alternate combats - with high losses on both sides - the place finally remained in the possession of the enemy after changing hands several times.

10 Sept. 1944

Also in the break-through area of Croce the fight was continued all day long with ever increasing bitterness on both sides. Our garrison, strongly weakened by casualties, was pushed back to the west.

3. Balkan Peninsula:

The transfer of units stationed on the Aegean Islands is being continued.

Partisans systematically attacked traffic routes in the central and northern Greek area. Several times large groups of Greek gendarmes deserted and joined the Communists.

Traffic between Salonika and Athens is limited due to the lack of protection. The willingness of native personnel to work is steadily diminishing. The coal situation is becoming especially critical; only limited supplies exist in Greece.

Signs of the disintegration in the Croatian formations are becoming more apparent.

So far no reports came in from the Serbian-Macedonian territory about the behavior of the Bulgarian forces since the declaration of war. The 5th Bulgarian Army is being moved. The following measures have been taken.:

- a. All Bulgarian borders are closed, the defenses are complete.
- b. All Bulgarian troops still outside Old-Bulgaria were made prisoners.

The same rule applies to Macedonia, with the exception of the Macedonian Nationals who are at the disposal of the German General, Southeast for defensive tasks.

The two railroad lines connecting Serbia and Macedonia are blocked as the result of attacks by the Allied Air Force; the roads are likewise blocked by partisans.

Chetniks are in an open battle with parts of the 13th "SS" Alpine Division "Handschar".

At the Iron Gate the Combat "Rehe" is now south of Kladovo after annihilating Russian paratroopers.

10 Sept. 1944

The Flotilla "Lower Danube" has established a strongpoint in Prahovo after discontinuation of its break-through attempts.

The 92nd Grenadier Brigade is advancing from Berzasca in the direction of the Danube bend at Svinita. Support of the advance by the Danube Flotilla is no longer possible since the water level is too low.

The arrival of reinforcements in Belgrade is expected in the evening of 9 Sept.

The Commanding General, Southeast has, for the defense of his eastern front, ordered the following:

- a. the defense front against Thrace should follow the Greek border along the Struma and include the Rupel Pass; this will be the task of a division which is being brought forward;
- b. defense of the Old-Bulgarian-Macedonian border at the main border crossing;
- c. setting-up of a defense front running from the Serbian-Bulgarian border to the Danube on the 1st Alpine Division; along the Danube, between Timok and Orsova and in the Cerna sector by forces of the Commanding General, Southeast;
- d. the forces transferred from the Aegean Islands are to defend the railroad lines of Greece and of the northern Serbian area.

4. Eastern Front:

Army Group Southern Ukraine:

North of Sibiu a Russian attack against the 2nd Hungarian Army must soon be expected; the Hungarians are said to be of little fighting calibre.

North of Brasso the projecting point of Transylvania was evacuated in order to save forces and a withdrawal was made to the Oklad - Csikszereda line.

Attacks in the eastern Carpathian Mountains were repulsed.

Army Group Northern Ukraine:

The fighting between Sanok and Debica has increased in severity.

10 Sept. 1944

East of Sanok the Russians were able to achieve a deep penetration, which, with the help of all forces available, could be sealed off. Also east of Jaslo fighting took place. Here German reinforcements are being brought forward.

Central Army Group:

After the enemy gained bridgeheads across the Narew north of Serok and south of Rozan on previous days, only local combat activity took place yesterday along the entire Army Group front. East of Ostrolenka local penetrations were halted in heavy forest fighting.

Northern Army Group:

Nothing to report.

Naval Staff, Chief of Operations Branch reports the intention of Naval Command Norway to carry out training at sea with the 1st Task Forces.

The Commander in Chief, Navy demands that this is to be done only if sufficient air reconnaissance is available and on condition that the Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters be informed.

Chief, Operations Division reports furthermore that the Armed Forces High Command has answered in the affirmative an inquiry by the Naval Staff concerning the destruction of German ships in repair or under construction in Finland, as far as they cannot be removed. Naval Liaison Staff Finland received a corresponding directive.

The Commander in Chief, Navy is of the opinion that the situation in regard to the occupation of Hogland is at present unsatisfactory. It is not justifiable to leave the strategically important position to the Russians on 15 Sept. without resistance; it is to be considered whether the occupation of Hogland should not be undertaken in spite of the negative attitude of the Armed Forces High Command.

Special Items

I. Finland-Operation "Tanne Ost": for copy of the orders by the Armed Forces High Command concerning Finnish merchant vessels see War Diary C III.

10 Sept. 1944

In the forenoon Naval Command Baltic, Admiral, Eastern Baltic, and Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Shipping and Transport Branch, received an advanced order for the preparation of forces for operation "Tanne Ost".

In the afternoon a proposal as per "1/Skl 2842/44 Gkdos. Chefs." is submitted to the Armed Forces High Command to staff operation "Tanne Ost" on 15 Sept. at the latest, as reliable reports have been received by Naval Staff that the Finns.

- a. have the intention to evacuate Hogland on 12 Sept.;
- b. will not resist the execution of "Tanne Ost."

The proposal is well documented and the start of preparations is reported. Since, however, naval units suitable for the occupation are already in ground combat with the Northern Army Group and new forces could neither be made available in time nor could be trained for tasks ashore, the assignment of Army forces is held to be essential. Therefore the Naval Liaison Officer at the Army General Staff has been asked to inquire if, when, and to what extent the Army is willing to render assistance.

Naval Command Baltic, Admiral, Eastern Baltic and Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division are again instructed and the High Command, Air Operations Staff is asked to confirm once more that units of the 1st Air Force and the anti-aircraft artillery of the Air Force will be provided for operation "Tanne Ost" according to the original plan.

II. According to an order by the Armed Forces High Command the "Armeegruppe G" (Southern France) will be renamed "Heeresgruppe G" ("Armée" - and "Heeres" - are synonyms for "Army".) (Tr.N.).

III. Among the exchanged prisoners of war are officers who have important news about the USA. and Canada.

IV. On account of experiences gained as the result of sabotage to the torpedoboats TA "14" and TA "17" at Leros, Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Fleet Branch issues an order to the Fleet Command and to the Commander of Destroyers requesting information whether there exists a definite order for the fleet that the off-shore side of a ship must continuously be guarded by a boat.

It is necessary that the experiences gained from the occurrences at Leros be utilized in every respect.

10 Sept. 1944

V. Admiral, Aegean Sea requests Group South ("Radiogram monitored by Naval Staff) to check again the practicability of operation "Fliegenpilz", since, in his opinion, the project was planned under different conditions than exist at present. The mine barrages were at that time aimed at Turkey expecting her active participation in the war. But now the Thracian area is open to the enemy; likewise the Dodecanese and the Aegean Islands after our voluntary evacuation. Admiral, Aegean Sea believes that the Russians, on the one hand, are interested in the opening of the Dardanelles while the British, on the other hand, are interested in maintaining the present state. This could possibly lead to a conflict in the eastern Mediterranean, a conflict whose outbreak we should facilitate in every way.

In addition the military execution of the operation is getting more and more difficult since a radar set has for the first time been noticed on Gallipoli.

This matter deserves a further check-up.

VI. Naval Staff, Naval Intelligence Division submits the except "11418 geh." based on the evaluation of the enemy by the Army General Staff, Foreign Armies West. The Army concludes from the fact that the enemy is taking air pictures of the lower Rhine area - Wesel Arnheim - and impending attack against the northern part of the Western Front in north-eastern direction. Concrete clues for imminent landings in Jutland or in the Heligoland Bight were not gained by Foreign Armies West from the enemy situation in England. The necessary and efficient air reconnaissance is however not at our disposal.

Furthermore Naval Staff, Naval Intelligence Division submits to the front staffs as per "5401 Gkdos." an agent's report about intended Anglo-American landings in northern Europe to cut off the German troops in northern Finland. Ostensibly the British Foreign Office is apprehensive of a Russian advance and wants to forestall it. This report is held to be of little value.

Futherrmore Naval Staff, Naval Intelligence Division submits information as per 11284 geh. about the training and tactics of British landing craft formations and about enemy land positions on the Greek continent and on the islands for the infiltration of war materials and agents to Greece (119933 geh.)

10 Sept. 1944

Situation 10 Sept.

I. Situation West Area.

1. Enemy Situation:

The 15th Group carried on very lively air reconnaissance with special emphasis on the safety of formation "348". Moderate air reconnaissance of the 19th Group during the entire day. One British vessel was located at 2206 in Al 9580.

2. Own Situation:

A. West French Fortresses:

Brest: The fight around Le Conquet ended on 10 Sept. Continuous attacks by fighter-bombers and artillery shelling of defense installations and the city took place. Hospital boats at the roadsteads were fired on by fighter-bombers.

No news from Lorient, St. Nazaire and Gironde.

In La Rochelle the enemy opened fire with anti-tank guns upon approach of one of our commandos from d'Oleron

On 9 Sept. a delegation headed by a French captain in uniform, appeared before the Harbor Defense Commander of d'Oleron with the declaration that an American division and regular French troops had arrived. The demand was made to lay down arms and the promise was given that the Germans would be permitted to remain on the island. The request was rejected by the Harbor Defense Commander.

B. Withdrawal Movements:

On 9 Sept. 700 more men arrived in Belfort.

In Holland isolated groups of the Manning Regiment "Beverloo" fought their way through to southern Holland and declared that other companies have joined the Army.

C. Channel Coast:

An enemy attack at night against the fortress Le Havre was broken up by concentrated fire. The entire fortress area is under heaviest enemy artillery shelling. Along the land front only eight heavy anti-aircraft guns and 17

10 Sept. 1944

artillery guns are in serviceable condition. Mobile anti-aircraft guns do not exist anymore.

The movements of the 15th Army are coming off as planned. In the Albert Canal area the strongest enemy concentration was at Beeringen where his break-through attempt to the north succeeded. On 10 Sept. 4,000 soldiers, 450 vehicles, 20 guns, 450 horses as well as the wounded, the prisoners, and equipment were ferried across the Scheldt. The Harbor Defense Group Flushing was assigned as additional anti-aircraft artillery between Flushing and Breskens.

In the forenoon enemy naval forces were sighted off Dunkirk and Ostend outside of artillery range. The demolitions in Calais are being continued and the inundation was carried out. In the Channel Narrows the Batteries "Todt" and "Lindemann" shelled at 0740 six freighters steaming close to the English coast; one of them probably sank.

The PT Boat S "112" is to transfer from Brest to Peterport during the coming night.

II. North Sea. Norway. Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

Enemy Situation:

The 16th Group reconnoitred the northern North Sea up to the coast of West Jutland; by night lively enemy activity took place; numerous reports about the sighting of and attacks by enemy forces in the area of the Eastern Frisian Islands and the Dutch coast, especially on the Scheldt and Meuse Estuaries were received.

Enemy air activity against the Scheldt traffic is increasing. Ferries and naval landing craft were damaged.

Own Situation:

Last night the Wielinger channel between buoy 2A and 3 was mined by Group A of the 34th Minesweeper Flotilla with 36 LMB. As the result the southern part of the fairway is blocked.

Seven more vessels were put at the disposal of Special Operations Staff "Knuth". PT boats laid 24 LMB in the Scheldt between Lille and Bath.

10 Sept. 1944

supplementary reports about the demolitions in Antwerp have been made by eye witnesses. Although it was learned from these reports that the most important harbor entrances cannot be used anymore, nevertheless further measures, to accomplish a complete shut-down, are still necessary and must be started. There is no doubt that a large part of the intended demolitions was not accomplished.

Defense and convoy tasks were carried out according to plan.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

In the forenoon at about 1000 40 enemy fighters and bombers were in the Lister -Lindesnes area without undertaking attacks. Our own air activity was of the normal kind.

Conspicuous British weather reports from Great Britain to Murmansk and from Spitzbergen to Great Britain were detected.

Naval Command Norway has issued operation order "1105 Gkdos. Chefs." concerning the weather observation operation "Goldschmied", the aim of which is to set up a Radio-Sounding-Station on Fridtjof Nansen Land. (As per 1/Skl Gkdos. 2504/44 Chefs.). The order was brought to the attention of the Air Force, Operations Staff.

III. Skagerrak. Baltic Sea Entrances. Baltic Sea.

Admiral Skagerrak:

According to an agent report the Norwegian ships DICTO and LIONEL departed from Goeteborg on 1 Sept. and are said to be in the Brofjord. Preparations in Lysekil permit the conclusion that the British MTB traffic to Sweden will be revived. This report is being relayed to Naval Command Baltic and Admiral, Skagerrak.

Naval Command, Baltic issues directive "5790 A I" with instructions about the forces recently detached from Commanding Admiral, Defenses West and assigned to Naval Command, Baltic, and Directive "05758 Gkdos. about bases for PT boats in the command area of the Naval Command Baltic.

Central And Western Baltic:

Thirty-five vessels were on minesweeping duty. Two miles were swept in the Danzig Bay, two in the Kiel Bay

10 Sept. 1944

and one each in the Pommeranian Bay and north of Darsserort.

Admiral, Eastern Baltic:

At 0918 a boat with 18 fleeing Estonians was seized in AO 3518 by the patrol boat "313".

The evacuations from Finland are being carried out as planned; the German citizens from Helsinki and the remaining officials and goods from there are being evacuated.

In the Riga Bay the transfer of the 23rd Infantry Division from Riga to Arensburg has been started.

The 6th Destroyer Flotilla reports concerning the situation in Turju that the removal of the German ships - the salvage ships being especially valuable - would not be simple on account of the Finnish resistance which can be expected. The Flotilla requests four additional tugs to be sent to Turku not later than the evening of 11 Sept. with two prize crews and convoy for 12 Sept.

Naval Command Baltic requests an immediate decision whether the ships should be removed by the 6th Destroyer Flotilla if necessary by force, even at the risk of incidents.

At 2320 Naval Command Baltic give out directions for the preparation of operation "Tanne Ost" (immediate readiness of naval Artillery Battalions 629 and 633 for going aboard, making available personnel for a Port Command and more patrol and work personnel).

IV. Submarine Warfare.

Two submarines returned from the Channel area.

The submarine commanded by Brauel sank 3,000 BRT.

The submarine commanded by v. Brämen sank one freighter of 1,500 BRT and one LCT of 350 tons.

On 1 Sept. the submarine commanded by Matuschka, in action off the northern Channel, sank one destroyer out of a group in AM 5612 and one tanker of 7,000 BRT of an incoming convoy; on 9 Aug. one freighter of 5,000 BRT and one tanker of 6,000; another freighter was torpedoed.

10 Sept. 1944

The submarine U "92" torpedoed a medium ship of 3,000 BRT in BF 3610. The sinking is probable.

Of the last seven Channel boats three have so far given reports of passing; two are known to be lost; no reports from the remaining two boats.

V. Aerial Warfare.

1. West Area:

In the area of the western front and Rhineland, the same strong enemy air activity took place as was usual during the last days.

1,000 enemy planes were in action in the Le Havre area and dropped numerous demolition bombs on the fortress.

2. Reich Territory:

Over the Ruhr area and Westphalia about 100 fighter-bombers attacked transport objectives and places.

Beginning 1045 several hundred bombers with fighter escort entered the Reich by way of the Scheldt, Wiesbaden, Mannheim to attack Nuernberg, Stuttgart, Ulm and Heilbronn.

At the same time several hundred bombers, likewise with fighter escort, flew in from Italy by way of Sibenik, east of Kalgenfurt, where 100 bombers switched off to the southwest to Kalgenfurt, while the bulk attacked industrial and oil installations in the Vienna area and in the city itself at about 1030. Great damage was inflicted.

At night about 40 planes were over western Germany and 40 to 50 Mosquitoes carried out a nuisance raid on Berlin.

3. Mediterranean Theater:

Six hundred and sixty planes were in the front area; during an attack on Trieste one steamer was set afire.

At night six reconnaissance planes flew over the Aegean Sea and thirteen planes brought supplies to the Balkan partisans.

10 Sept. 1944

4. East Area:

On 9 Sept. 234 own and 435 enemy missions were flown; one of our planes was lost and three enemy planes were shot down.

In Norway our increased air action in the coastal area of Kristiansand - Stavanger was directed against ship objectives.

At night eight courier planes flew either to or from Sweden.

VI. Situation in the Mediterranean Theater.

1. Enemy Situation:

The patrolling of the southern French and the Italian coast is being continued. At 2310 on 9 Sept. about 40 ships were confirmed by radar south of St. Tropez. Radar "Bordighera" was shelled by naval forces on 9 and 10 Sept. In Livorno five freighters, six artillery PT boats, and three small vessels were present in the morning according to an aerial picture.

Last night the signal station Solta in the Adriatic Sea reported two enemy vessels cruising in the Lissa - Solta area.

At 0300 two enemy submarines were observed in the Aegean Sea, 20 miles southwest of Milos, at 1548 at the entrance to the Trikeri Canal, and a third one 15 miles south of Cassandra Huk.

2. Own Situation:

Area of Naval Command Italy:

The change in weather permitted the resumption of the convoy and defense duty in full along the Italian west coast. A second degree alert was ordered for the area along the Liguian coast, west of Savona.

Besides shelling from the sea, Rimini was continuously and heavily attacked by bombers and fighter-bombers.

Area Navy Group South

a. Adriatic Sea: During the night of 8 Sept. the Naval Signal Station "Ombla" was attacked by partisans who could

10 Sept. 1944

be repulsed without any casualties being suffered on our part. At 1750 six Mosquitoes carried out an attack on the Ombla Bay without causing serious damage. In the course of repeated attacks in the evening a direct hit was achieved on the Shell tank storage Dubrovnik. At 2300 a bomb hit sank one tug boat in Corsini.

On 10 Sept. heavy damages resulted from the attack on Trieste, already mentioned in Air Situation; among others a motor coaster was sunk and the food supplies of the Harbor Defense Command were destroyed. Heavy damage was caused to city and railroad installations.

Twenty-four KMA mines were dropped north of Cesenatico.

b. Aegean Sea: Thirty men of the crew of the submarine chaser UJ "2142" which sank south of Milos on 9 Sept. were sighted on floats south of Milos.

A crash boat on duty off Suda became a total loss after several air attacks. One motor minesweeper and one boat of the Coastal Defense Crete were shelled unsuccessfully by an enemy submarine while on a search.

According to monitored radiograms and the "Leander" reports by Admiral, Aegean Sea, the evacuation of the Peloponnesos and the island Kephallonia is taking its planned course. After evacuation of the Ionian Islands, the Patras Gulf is to be blocked effectively. For this purpose the coastal defense in the Patras - Corinth area will also be reinforced. The sea-transport situation has become regrettably aggravated by increased enemy air activity, by the dropping of mines and by the high winds. It has become absolutely necessary to confine all ship movements to the night hours. The destruction of small vessels has considerably reduced the transport volume.

c. Danube Situation: No essential changes in the mine situation. The Group "Iron Gate" took part in the operation "Donau-Elfe", as well as in land and river operations; small groups advanced to Svinita and confirmed that the water markings are generally in place.

The towing barges and tows in Milanovac therefore received orders from the Inspectorate of Mine Clearance Danube to make a renewed breakthrough attempt up the river.

No reports from the strong-point Prahovo.

CONFIDENTIAL

10 Sept. 1944

Fighting is evidently going on in Moldova. According to a report by the Danube Flotilla, half of New Moldova was lost to the Rumanians. The clearance vessel WEICHESEL was shelled by artillery off Moldova at 1800.

By orders of Group South, Inspectorate of Mine Clearance Danube - after completion of its tasks in Belgrade - is to transfer to the ship HELIOS up the river, west of the Hungarian border, into Reich territory.

CONFIDENTIAL

11 Sept. 1944

Items of Political Importance.

On 10 Sept. Churchill reached the Canadian east coast and left, accompanied by the leading military personalities of the Empire, for Quebec to attend the conference with Roosevelt.

Several reports indicate that the London Polish Government in exile is in the state of a serious internal crisis. The reason for it is that the Prime Minister Mikolaicyk is being blamed by many Poles for having gone too far in his policy of reconciliation towards Moscow. In addition General Sosnkowsky in an order of the day pointed out with much emphasis the lack of support which the Warsaw revolt has received from the Allies. Thereby he has contributed considerably to the aggravation of the crisis.

According to press reports Churchill and Roosevelt have immediately made it clear to the Polish Government in exile that they would cease working for a Polish-Russian understanding if the Polish Government departs from the policy of reconciliation; this actually means nothing more than a policy of submission towards Russia.

London officials repeatedly warned the evacuated population not to return to London.

Conference on the Situation with the Commander in Chief, Navy at 1115.

I. Naval Staff, Operations Division, Naval Air and Air Force Liaison Section reports about the result of air reconnaissance along the southern English coast and over the mouth of the Thames. No large concentrations of shipping or landing craft were observed; preparations for landing expeditions from the southeastern part of England appear unlikely. However it must be kept in mind that a complete check of the smaller ports and the Thames cannot and will not be achieved because of the very strong enemy defenses.

II. Naval Staff, Operations Division, Operations Branch, West reports on the information so far received about harbor demolitions at Antwerp; the picture is still incomplete. It is especially necessary that some destructive measures are taken against the important "Kreuzschanz" lock.

The weapons needed for this task are on the way.

11 Sept. 1944

III. Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division reports that the Battery "Tirpitz" near Constanta was in possession of sufficient wireless equipment, among others of a 40/70 Watt transmitter set with a range of 200 km.

The Commander in Chief, Navy states in this connection that therefore all facilities necessary for an efficient military command had been available.

A report about the events which led to the abandonment of the battery has not yet been received.

IV. Naval Staff, Chief of Naval Intelligence Division points out that the Swedish press stresses the fact that southern Finland was to be sure evacuated by the Germans, but that northern Finland is still in German hands. The armistice negotiations between Rumania and Russia are presumably drawing to a close.

Conference in a Restricted Circle:

V. The request by Admiral, Aegean Sea for dropping operation "Fliegenpilz" has in the meantime been submitted to Naval Staff by Group South.

Commander in Chief, Navy is of the opinion that there is no reason why the operation should be called off now, since there is no clarity in regard to the future. In addition no military disadvantages result from keeping in readiness the two ships provided for operation "Fliegenpilz". These two ships are only on a 48 hour alert and can in the meantime be used for transport tasks.

The preparations for the operation will therefore be maintained; Group South will be informed accordingly.

VI. Army Situation:

1. Western Front:

Strong fighter-bomber activity made the withdrawal movements of the 15th Army across the Scheldt difficult.

All signs point to the fact that the enemy will try to take possession of the land bridge between the inundated areas in the Bruges - Gent sector.

11 Sept. 1944

At the 1st Parachute Army Command the enemy, who had reached the Beeringen bridgehead, penetrated our front in several places; he achieved a deep break-through to the north and northeast up to close to the Dutch border. To prevent the threat of a break-through all available forces of the Parachute Army are being put into action.

Our weak forces between Liege and Longwy are not able to stop the advance of the enemy who took Luxembourg.

It is to be expected that the British army group will attempt a break-through into Holland by concentrating its forces in a small area while the Americans will attempt their break-through in the direction of Aachen - Cologne.

Due to monitored radiograms enemy landing operations do not appear to be improbable; all necessary measures have been taken in the Netherlands. By evening the situation report of Commanding General, West had not yet been received by Army Liaison Officer.

2. Italian Front:

Western Front:

Our operations resulted in the recapture of some elevated points.

Southern Front:

Yesterday, too, the enemy restricted his offensive to the central sector of the 76th Armored Corps, while strong patrols probed the coastal strip. In spite of our high losses suffered in the heavy fighting of the foregone days, all attacks - particularly strong in the Germano area - were repulsed in dogged fighting due to the high morale of our troops. Penetrations were mopped up in energetically executed counterthrusts.

3. Balkan Peninsula:

Withdrawal movements on the Peloponnesos are being carried out as planned.

Combat activities of Bulgarian forces against our forces in the area of Bitolj ceased after brief fighting; the Bulgarians were disarmed and taken prisoners.

In the Serbian-Macedonian area the partisan activity is now being extended to all important roads.

11 Sept. 1944

The southern bank of the Danube is free of the enemy. Our forces started their attack from Svinita in the direction of Orsova.

In Croatia lively local partisan resistance is met; further demoralization of the Croatian formations is apparent.

4. Eastern Front:

The 57th and 46th Army, 2 mechanized corps and other formations have entered Bulgaria.

The Strong concentration of Russian forces north of the southern Carpathian Mountains is being continued.

South of Cluj the 2nd Hungarian Army repulsed a Rumanian attack.

In the bend of the Carpathian Mountains our withdrawal movements are being carried out as planned in spite of severe rear-guard fighting. Also in the eastern Carpathian Mountains, south of Czernowitz, the front is being taken back.

Between Sanok and Debica severe defensive battles are still raging. The enemy was able to extend his penetrations and to gain up to 12 km of territory; Krosno was lost.

While the lull in the Narew bridgeheads of the Central Army Group continues, the enemy has started his expected attack against the Warsaw bridgehead; his attacks northeast of Ostrolenka assume larger and larger proportions.

In both places the enemy achieved considerable penetrations which so far could not be sealed off due to lack of reserves. The Russians crossed the Ostrolenka - Lomza road.

No combat reports from the other parts of the eastern front.

VII. Naval Staff, Operations Division, Chief of Operations Branch points to the special importance of the weather station in East Greenland and to the proposal made by Naval Staff, Hydrographic and Meteorological Division. It is proposed that, after the failure of operation "Edelweiss", the weather ship, now destined for Fridtjof Nansen Land be sent on a second mission to East Greenland.

The risk the ship would run along the coast of Greenland is however very great especially after detection by the enemy. A check must therefore be made whether this task cannot be carried out by a freight glider or by a large plane.

11 Sept. 1944

VIII. The Commander in Chief, Navy is instructed concerning operation "Tanne" that the Armed Forces High Command was notified about a directive issued to Naval Command Baltic, that the operation will be prepared in any case and certain Naval forces kept in readiness.

IX. The Naval Attache Madrid is instructed concerning the proposal by the Fortress Commander La Pallice to deliver to Spain the oil stores which are no longer needed. He is to ascertain whether or not the Spaniards desire the oil. It is to be pointed out that transport ships are not available in La Pallice.

Special Items.

I. Taken from situation report of the Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters:

Admiral Voss conveyed to the Fuehrer the proposal made by the Commander in Chief, Navy that Rotterdam and Amsterdam be declared fortified areas until all harbor demolitions are completed. The Fuehrer gave the necessary orders to the Armed Forces High Command.

II. Operation "Tanne Ost":

Naval Liaison Officer Hogland reported by radio that Finnish guns are still in position and that the personnel is still on the island. Strength 100 officers, 430 non-commissioned officers and 1,300 men.

The Naval Liaison Officer reports supplementary to the telegram sent on 8 Sept. that the Island Commander has declared he would have to notify his superior whenever the occupation starts. However he will not carry out orders to resist a German occupation, believing that such action on his part is in the interest of the future of Finland. The Naval Liaison Officer believes that the Island Commander is sincere.

The important report will be submitted to Armed Forces High Command shortly after midnight. At 0120 the Navy will inform the Armed Forces High Command that the following forces are available:

- a. one naval artillery detachment of three batteries, 12-15 cm; one battery, 4-15.5 cm; in all 650 men;
- b. one naval artillery battalion, personnel only; about 650 men;

11 Sept. 1944.

- c. personnel for one port command, one naval radio transmitter, two naval signal stations, and one company for general naval duties.

Likewise are to be assigned the two Assault Boat Commandos 902 and 903 at present with the Navy in the Baltic area.

These forces will presumably be ready in the morning of 15 Sept. in the Reval area.

The Army General Staff is requested to provide:

one infantry regiment consisting of two battalions and battalion units; one company of engineers and supply troops.

At noon Naval Liaison Staff Finland reports that the evacuation of southern Finland has so far been carried out as planned and that the German citizens of the military offices have left Helsinki. Naval Liaison Staff, the German general and the remaining materiels will be taken aboard at noon on 12 Sept. and depart early on 13 Sept.

At 1445 a most immediate blitz telegram is received from the Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters stating that the Fuehrer has ordered a speedy execution of operation "Tanne Ost" in accordance with the proposal of Commander in Chief, Navy submitted by telephone. Sufficient supply of the island is emphasized.

The Army General Staff is providing one regiment.

Thereupon order "2864 Chefs." is sent to Naval Command Baltic and Admiral, Eastern Baltic. It reads as follows.

- "1. The Fuehrer has ordered the speedy execution of "Tanne Ost".
2. The operational command is in the hands of Admiral, Eastern Baltic according to directive by Naval Command Baltic.
3. Participating Naval Forces:
see "OKW/WFST (M) Ia 773341/44 Chefs. - Naval Forces according to operation "Tanne".
4. Naval Command Baltic will set the date. 15 Sept. is to be looked upon as the very final date. In case the naval artillery battalions cannot arrive in time, occupation is for the time being to be carried out by forces stationed in the Reval area to be followed by the naval artillery battalions.

11 Sept. 1944

5. Admiral, Eastern Baltic is to take up without delay communication with Army Group North and the 1st Air Force.
6. Sufficient supplies for the Island are to be secured immediately after the occupation."

Furthermore the Naval Command Baltic has to check the possible use of the Skerry anti-aircraft artillery stationed at present at "Rotbuche" - See telegram "OKW 773341/44 Chefs/ in war Diary, C, III.

The following wire "2867/44 Chefs." is sent to High Command Air, Operations Staff:

"Since it must be reckoned with that the Finns, according to the latest reports, have evacuated their anti-aircraft guns, the Naval Staff holds the furnishing of equipment by the Air Force to be indispensable. Confirmation is requested that the 1st Air Force will also furnish arms; information is requested to what extent."

At 2120 Naval Command Baltic issued an order to Admiral, Eastern Baltic to put the entire Skerry Anti-Aircraft Artillery "Rotbuche" into action for "Tanne Ost."

At 2230 naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Shipping and Transport Branch reports that the motorship MOLTKEFELS is taking aboard at Gdynia the Naval Artillery Battalion 629 with guns; it will then sail for Pillau, to take on the personnel of the Naval Artillery Battalion 531. After loading the ship is to go as express transport to Reval.

In "Adm. Qu.VI 5322 Chefs." basic directives are found respectively repeated concerning the treatment of Finnish ships. A tabulation of the Finnish ships which were in the German sphere of influence on 11 Sept. is likewise given. Copy of this report in War Diary, C, III.

At midnight Naval Liaison Staff Finland reports that since midnight there is no communication between Finland and the Reich. The only communication is by wireless.

III. Naval Command Baltic and Norway have made new proposals for the position of the new barrages in the Skagerrak declared area. Naval Staff makes the following decision as per "2853 Chefs.". Excerpts follow:

- "1. It is agreed to barrages XXXI and XXXIV as proposed.
2. In regard to barrage XXXII Naval Staff has no objections either to the proposal submitted by Naval Command Norway or to that by Naval Command Baltic.

11 Sept. 1944

CONFIDENTIAL

3. The laying of barrage XXXIV may precede XXXI. Boundaries of declared area and Swedish buoys to be moved only after further barrages have been laid east of the declared area.
4. As reports came in lately about the resumption of merchant traffic by MTB's between England and Sweden, the equipping of the EMC mines in barrage XXXIV with an improved "Igelit" snagline is necessary. Further matters are to be cleared directly with the Mining and Barrage Inspectorate.

IV. Naval Command Baltic and Admiral. Skagerrak receive orders as per "2732 Chefs." to prepare the blocking in the Sound North including the Swedish territorial waters. Execution to be carried out however only by special order of Naval Staff.

V. Naval Staff, Naval Radar Division issues the "Current Enemy Situation, Locating Service Nr. 8" in "1000 Gkdos." of 11 Sept.

VI. Naval Staff, Naval Intelligence Division submits excerpt "5421/44 Gkdos." concerning enemy situation as established by Air Forces, Operations Staff of 11 Sept. to the command posts (see War Diary D-8a).

VII. According to a report by Naval Command Baltic the Net Barrage Formation has made preparations for a quick hauling in of the nets and buoys at position "Rotbuche". The question whether this should be carried out by 15 Sept. is answered by Naval Staff as per "28042 Gkdos.": "Buoys and nets at position "Rotbuche" must be collected by 15 Sept.

VIII. In a strongly worded order the Chief, armed Forces High Command points out that very severe criticism is being heard about the lack of discipline of the retreating troops of the western front. The Commander of the Field Police Command III is again given full authority by order of the Fuehrer to take immediate action against these symptoms of deterioration; he is asked to make full use of his authority and to proceed with the utmost severity. In the case of officers he also has the authority to carry out immediate execution of sentence imposed by court martial.

CONFIDENTIAL

Situation 11 Sept.

I. Situation West Area.

1. Enemy Situation:

According to radio interception, submarine hunt was carried out in the northern Channel.

Lively reconnaissance activity of the 15th Group; British vessels were located without special results.

2. Own Situation:

A. Western French Fortresses:

Night supply by air of the fortresses had to be postponed due to an air raid on the Zellhausen air base near Aschaffenburg; only Brest was supplied by one plane. Brest is exposed to heavy artillery fire and uninterrupted fighter-bomber attacks. Since last night the commercial harbor and the Mining and Barrage Command are being heavily shelled

At 2325 the Fortress Commander reported that the garrison has dwindled down to about one fifth after very hard fighting; the best soldiers have been sacrificed. Our artillery is almost completely wiped out; only 15 guns are still in conditions. The main defense line is for the most part "plowed up"; the demolition of the harbor and of all important installations is compelled. The fortress will be defended to the very end.

12,437 men are in Lorient. The figure does not include the forces of Commanding Admiral, Defenses West, whose strength is still unknown. Surrender negotiations were offered to the fortress Commander of Gironde-North by a U.S. major, ostensibly in the name of Eisenhower. The offer was curtly rejected.

B. Withdrawal Movements:

On 10 Sept. 736 men arrived in Belfort.

C. Channel Coast:

On 10 Sept. the fortress Le Havre the naval garrison of which consists of 3,965 men, was most heavily shelled from land and sea. (Battleship and monitor).

In the afternoon of 10 Sept. and in the morning of 11 Sept. heavy air raids, in which 300 to 400 planes participated each time, took place causing serious devastations in the

CONFIDENTIAL

11 Sept. 1944 en

entire fortress area. At 1700 of 11 Sept. a major attack started against our northeast positions. Although at first unsuccessful, it is now meeting with decreasing resistance due to the lack of anti-tank weapons. The harbor entrance was finally blocked by two scuttled frigates.

According to a report received at 1622 of 11 Sept. the enemy is penetrating deeper into the inner fortress. There are hardly any anti-tank weapons and artillery left.

No reports from Dunkirk and Calais. The long distance Batteries "Todt" and "Lindmann" fired at the British coast.

On 10 Sept. Army Coastal Battery 13/1265 with four 15cm guns was transferred from Guernsey to Jersey.

In the night of 10 Sept. the PT boat S "112" sailed from Brest to Peterport as planned.

The situation in Antwerp has not changed.

Enemy air activity against the ferrying traffic across the Scheldt estuary and the Walcheren Canal continues to increase.

In the afternoon the harbor area of Breskens was heavily bombed. Other less important points were frequently raided by fighter-bombers. Casualties and material damages were suffered.

Admiral, Netherlands transmits an inquiry made by the 15th Army Command whether a submarine could be used for supplying Dunkirk, as considerably more troops are in the fortress than was intended.

According to a rough estimate about 500 to 600 tons of additional supplies are needed.

Naval Command North will contact Air Force "Reich" in this matter since the use of a submarine is out of the question and no other facilities are at the disposal of the Navy.

II. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

Last night lively enemy air activity took place over the

CONFIDENTIAL

11 Sept. 1944

Heligoland Bight, the islands and coastal places. Since mines are suspected, convoy tasks had to be postponed partially. The dropping of mines was observed near Helder and in the Schulpentat.

The 7th Minesweeper Flotilla and 9th Motor Minesweeper Flotilla dropped barrages "SWK 15" along the Holland coast; fighter-bombers attacked continuously without inflicting damages.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

In the evening of 9 Sept. a gun of the Battery Petsamo was put out of action by enemy shelling; a cutter was sunk.

On the same day at 1135 the minesweeper M "5631" sank after striking a mine near the exit of the Romsdalsfjord on the southern Norwegian coast. Lively activity of the enemy air forces.

At 1018 the naval landing craft F "190" struck a mine off Lister while laying coastal mines "A" and ran aground.

At 1225 the Norwegian coastal steamer VANG sailing along was sunk by a submarine off Lister.

At 1353 the large drydock sank after an explosion; sabotage is suspected.

The dock is probably a total loss and the docking facilities are restricted to ships up to a length of 100 meters.

At 1405 50 Mosquitoes attacked four vessels of the 29th Minesweeper Flotilla at the approach of Kristiansand-Sound. Heavy damages were suffered; two of the boats were lost and considerable casualties were caused.

III. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

1. Admiral Skagerrak:

Patrol and convoy tasks were carried out as planned. The first small battle weapons arrived in Jutland; the Special Weapons Flotilla 365 was transferred to camp Asia (40 km south of Frederikshavn).

11 Sept. 1944

2. Western and Central Baltic:

In the afternoon and evening of 10 Sept. several small air force formations - among them torpedo carrying planes - with fighter protection entered the area of Memel - Ventpils from the east. At night strong incursions from the west; mines were laid in the Kiel and Danzig Bays. Seven mines were cleared by 33 boats on minesweeping duty.

3. Admiral, Eastern Baltic:

The Finns have now opened up and marked the new Soedra - Kvarken passage. A check-up and extension to the west by a German minesweeping formation is contemplated. No special occurrences in the Gulf of Finland. Considerable supply transports for the Northern Army Group were convoyed according to plan.

IV. Submarine Warfare.

The submarine U "480" returning from the Channel Coast area reported about having been submerged for 40 days; 17 of the 40 days in the operational area. 14,000 BRT and two frigates were sunk.

The submarine U "482" reported on conditions met with off the northern Channel.

V. Aerial Warfare.

1. West Area:

The usual lively fighter-bomber and reconnaissance activity was going on in the Holland - Belgium area.

2. Reich Territory:

During the day several groups of from 100 to 300 planes were over northwest and southern Germany making low flying attacks on transport objectives.

Considerable damages were caused in the Rhenish-Westphalian industrial area by bombers with fighter escort. At about 1000 several hundred enemy planes with fighter escort flew over the

11 Sept. 1944

Schedlt estuary and Liege in the direction of Frankfurt on the Main where they divided into three groups for attacks on objectives in central Germany and Saxony.

During the night 40 to 50 Mosquitoes attacked Berlin.

150 planes mined the Baltic Sea.

At midnight a heavy night attack was carried out against Darmstadt causing heavy damages.

3. Mediterranean Theater:

One hundred twenty four-engined planes attacked the harbor, city and oil refinery of Trieste. In the Italian front sector, particularly along the Adriatic Sea, 750 enemy planes were in action. During the night 27 planes supplied the partisans on the Balkan Peninsula. Aerial photographs were made of the harbors of Brindisi and Taranto.

4. East Area:

Two hundred seventeen own and 117 enemy missions were flown. We suffered two losses; two enemy planes were downed.

VI. Situation Mediterranean:

1. Area of German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

Off the southern French coast, minesweeping formations, one cruiser and two destroyers were sighted. In addition to aerial reconnaissance over Brindisi and Taranto, aerial photographs of Naples revealed the presence of one carrier, four cruisers, ten destroyers, fourteen convoy boats, one submarine, six MTB's, 79 landing craft, and about 80 to 90 transporters and freighters of more than 500,000 BRT. Along the Adriatic coast enemy naval forces were at sea in the Rimini area shelling the coast.

Own Situation:

On 11 Sept. too the Riviera coast between Mentone and

11 Sept. 1944

Ventimiglia was repeatedly shelled from the sea. During the night of 9 Sept. three German and three Italian assault boats as well as 14 "Marder" were in action. The German assault boats had contact with gun boats without success. Of the "Marder" only four returned. Detonations were heard; no successes however were reported.

During the night of 10 Sept. radar located enemy vessels eight miles east-southeast of Savona. There is no doubt that they were within our own barrages.

Convoys along the Italian west coast were unsuccessfully attacked by patrol boats and enemy planes.

In the evening the mine ship KIEBITZ and two submarines will leave on the minelaying operations "Murmel 11 and 12"

2. Area Naval Group South:

a.- Adriatic Sea: At noon of 11 Sept. three destroyers, seven MTB's and a number of small vessels were confirmed at Lissa by aerial photograph.

On the evening the 3rd PT Boat Flotilla with three boats will depart from Dubrovnik for torpedo operations against the coastal traffic in the area of Barletta-Bari.

Operation "Nordsee" (Evacuation of Island Miljet) was carried out during the night of 9 Sept.

b. Aegean Sea: Thirty men O-22 of them sounded - of the crew of the submarine chaser UJ "2142" which was sunk south of Milo's on 11 Sept. were rescued.

The difficulties in regard to the surveillance in the Aegean Sea due to the discontinuation of the Air Force radar station, have resulted in an order issued by the Air Force, Operations Staff (General of Communications) to Air Force Command Southeast. Therein it is stated that further reduction of radar stations is permissible only if the Army and Navy consent to it.

c. Danube Situation: Several planes dropped mines between km 1806 and 1792. In connection with operation "Donauelfe" three towing ships and 25 towed vessels were engaged in an artillery duel near Moldova on their trip up the Danube. Only slight damage was suffered. The formation is anchored just below Belgrade. Rescue of other vessels only possible after Orsova and the surrounding hills are occupied by our troops.

11 Sept. 1944

Cladovo and Tekija remain encircled. Group "Stelter" carried out a new advance to cover ground movements and was engaged in a heavy artillery duel with a battery on the Rumanian bank.

According to a report by the Inspector of Mine-Clearance Danube, enemy columns equipped with various types of arms have reached Turnu Severin; an engineer column is approaching Prahovo from the east. A motor ship sank after striking a mine at km 1216; the patrol ship BALMUNG had to be beached at 1m 1573.

VII. Situation East Area.

Japanese Homeland:

No new air raids have been made against the Japanese homeland up to 10 Sept. . The political relations with Portugal are very tense due to the Timor-controversy. However the report put out by the Allies that a break in diplomatic relations has occurred has so far not been confirmed.

Marianas:

No definite reports have been received about ground operations on Tinian and Guam. During the last days of August fighting on these islands was still observed from Rota. On 3 Sept. an American task group consisting of carriers, cruisers and destroyers attacked Rota. No reports about the results of this attack have come in. Rota was also bombed by about 75 enemy planes during the period from 16 to 24 Aug. On 2 Sept. the Americans put into action 37 planes against Pagan.

Bonin Islands:

On 31 Aug. and 3 Sept. the Bonin Islands were attacked by a U.S. task group with carriers and about 40 planes; in this operation the islands were also shelled by naval artillery on 1 Sept. Damage is slight.

Southwest Pacific:

Enemy operations against the island strong points are being carried out continuously. On 2 Sept. Nauru, Yap, the Mulli Atoll, Takao on Formosa, Davac on Mindanao and Palau were

11 Sept. 1944

raided. On 3 Sept. the Americans put into action a task force of carriers, cruisers and destroyers against Wake, Truk, Ponape and Mang. On 6 Sept. Bougainville was bombed again. On the same day Palau was attacked by an American task force consisting of four battleships and carriers with about 600 planes; likewise Yap was attacked by a task force consisting of one battleship and carriers and about 200 planes. Landing attempts on the two islands are probable, but have not been confirmed so far.

On 7 Sept. Halmahera, Timor, Mindanao, the Marianes, the Markus and the Marshall Islands were bombed by U.S. air forces.

The number of American planes in action is give by the Japanese as follows:

Against the Caroline Islands 132, Marshall Islands 78, Nauru 34, Rabaul and Salomones 450, Kawieng 183, Halmahera 283, Manokawari 228; against other objects. 348.

This survey shows a considerable increase of the Allied air forces in the Southwest Pacific. The Japanese are expecting early enemy operations in the direction of New Guinea, Admiralty Islands and in the westerly direction against the Moluccas and the Philippines.

New Guinea:

On 2 Sept. a heavy air raid took place on Japanese positions near Manokwari. The remaining unoccupied islands of the southern group were taken by the Americans without resistance.

Indian Ocean:

In the course of the attack of an enemy task force on Padang on 24 Aug. a cement factory was hit according to Japanese reports; slight damage was also done to the harbor.

On 2, 3, 7, and 8 Sept. air raids took place on Timor and Celebes.

Loss of ships: According to an American report the Japanese lost the following ships:

On 31 Aug. 3 merchant ships and one small submarine.

On 2 Sept. 7 small freighters.

On 3 Sept. in the Sarang Sea 15 small to medium merchant ships

On 4 Sept. 13 small vessels near the Bonin Islands;

On 6 Sept. 17 small vessels at Palau.

11 Sept. 1944

Japanese submarines sank two American freighters totalling 10,000 BRT according to a Japanese report of 6 Sept.

Burma:

North Burma is for the present being abandoned by the Japanese. The Japanese forces are withdrawing to their starting positions along the Chindwin River. The Allies took the town Sittaung on 4 Sept. According to an American report the Japanese positions in Burma are now 30 miles north of Tiddim and 160 km south of Imphal. The Allies advanced 30 miles by way of Mogaung in the direction of Mandalay.

China:

At present American forces in China amount to 30,000 men. They were moved there by air from India; they are engaged in instructing Chinese air-borne troops and mechanized formations; at the same time they help to support the Chinese front. Japanese attacks along the North-South Railroad are making slow progress due to inclement weather. The Japanese reached the town Kiang and occupied town and airfield Linling on 7 Sept. The Japanese announced that the U.S.A. lost 89 planes in the Chinese area during the period of 21 to 31 Aug. Six Japanese planes were lost. On 6 Sept the first American air raid on Manchukuo and on industrial objectives in Anshan and Antung took place. On 9 Sept. Japanese planes attacked the American airfield Chengtu, shot down six planes in aerial fights and destroyed 28 on the ground. Six Japanese planes were lost.

12 Sept. 1944

Items of Political Importance.

Stalin has declined to accept an invitation to take part in the Quebec conference. Ostensibly military questions are to be treated almost exclusively, especially warfare against Japan after a quick ending of the European war. Problems in regard to Germany will be settled too.

The Rumanian-Russian armistice negotiations started in Moscow on 10 Sept.

The attitude of Moscow towards Turkey is growing more tense.

Conference on the Situation with the Commander in Chief, Navy at 1115.

I. The Commander in Chief, Navy orders that the requested forces, necessary for guarding important installations in the occupied areas, be assigned. These forces will total about 4,500 men; 650 have already been assigned to Naval Command Norway.

II. Naval Staff, Chief of Naval Intelligence Division: Sweden is speeding up the fortifications along the Swedish-Finnish border.

Dagens Nyheter (a Swedish newspaper) welcomes further limitation of German transit to Norway and suggests that Sweden should immediately impose sanctions of an economic nature; it points out that Sweden's position in regard to Germany is stronger today than ever before.

The Army and Air Force missions in Slovakia were dissolved. The revolt there is represented as a reckless step on the part of intellectual circles not supported by the masses.

According to a Swiss report, the British requested on 5 Sept. Turkish permission for transferring British troops to Turkey. The Turkish answer was again evasive. In the face of the present situation the report appears improbable; the value of the Turkish forces as far as the Allies are concerned is negligible. At present the Turks would certainly have to pay a high price in order to receive any guarantee from the Anglo-Americans against Russia.

The catapult ship WESTGALEN was torpedoed in the Kattegat according to the British news service.

12 Sept. 1944

Conference in a Restricted Circle.

III. Army Situation:

1. Western Front:

Enemy Situation:

The sharp dividing line drawn between the British and American Army Group south of Hasselt, results in a heavy concentration of the British troops within a very restricted region. The English forces consisting of 12 to 15 large formations are being concentrated in Belgium for the purpose of advancing from there into the Rhenish-Westphalian industrial area. The American Army Group is holding the wide front from Liege to the Swiss border. A special concentration has nowhere been observed. All formations, whose whereabouts had been unknown so far, have now been found in the front line. Speedy bringing up of more divisions from the rear area is not to be expected for the present except by air.

Own Situation:

The 15th Army succeeded in holding its position in spite of increasing enemy pressure; one division even advanced from its Scheldt bridgehead eastward to beyond Beverenwaes in the direction of Antwerp.

On both sides of Bruges enemy attacks were repulsed. Near Moerbrugge the enemy was able to expand his bridgehead.

The 67th Army Corps with parts of two divisions is marching in the direction of Antwerp. A heavy air raid on the town and harbor of Breskens delayed the ferrying across of further units of these divisions. The ferrying traffic was reduced by 040 per cent. In general, ferrying traffic is possible only at night. Another division is ready to be taken across the Scheldt.

The very heavy fighting of the 7th Army southwest of Aachen is still going on with high casualties. Further to the south of the city the enemy was able to advance to the northeast, a break-through has so far been prevented only by putting all reserves into action. Our situation here remains especially critical due to inadequate forces.

In Le Havre a major battle has been going on since 11 Sept. Heavy air raids on the fortress were carried out by 1,300 bombers. The shore front is being shelled by heavy units. Violent shelling covers the entire fortress area. At about noon heavy enemy tank attacks took place which led to infiltrations into the city.

12 Sept. 1944

Strong harassing fire lay on the fortresses Boulogne and Dunkirk. Our withdrawal movements between Aachen and Metz are being continued.

Concentrations of the enemy near Metz indicate an imminent major attack.

South of Nancy enemy attempts at crossing the Moselle were repulsed.

Numerous freight gliders landed in the area of Charmes and Neufchateau.

2. Italian Front:

On the southern front the preparations of the enemy between Florence and the west coast are being continued.

3. Balkan Peninsula:

Major sabotage activities are directed against the transport lines in northern Greece.

On the Struma front the Bulgarians for the first time directed harassing fire against our positions. While the disarming of the Bulgarian troops in the Bitolj area was carried out against slight resistance, heavy fighting is going on in the Prilep area. The Bulgarian air force took part in these combats using German planes.

The number of deserters of the Croatian formations has further increased.

Raids on roads and strong points in Albania are growing.

Serbia: Alarm units repulsed Rumanian attacks north of Moldova Nova and east of Fehertemplon.

4. Eastern Front:

The concentration of Russian formations north of the southern Carpathian Mountains continues.

Withdrawal movements in the large bend of the Carpathian Mountains and in the northern part of the eastern Carpathian Mountains are being carried out as planned.

The major defensive battle between Sanok and Debica is still going on. The enemy was able to gain more territory without however achieving a break-through.

12 Sept. 1944

Only local combat activity along the front of the Central Army Group.

The Warsaw bridgehead was defended against attacks which were weaker than on the day before; several penetrations were cleared.

Yesterday too, the enemy did not attack in the Narew bridgeheads. East of Ostrolenka heavy fighting continues.

Enemy attacks in the Bauske area were repulsed. The Russians are assembling strong forces in this area. It appears probable that they first wish to take possession of the Bauske area as an advance operational base before beginning their major offensive in the direction of Windau-Libau; they then hope to be able to make a strong thrust towards Riga. Thereby strong German forces would at least be prevented from being shifted. If the Russian plans succeed a wedge would be driven between the Northern Army Group and Central Army Group; a later reunion of the two groups would be impossible.

IV. Naval Staff, Operations Division, Chief of Operations Branch:

a. The tonnage requirements for September as reported by the Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping indicate an increase of 3,000 tons in the supply traffic to Norway as compared with the month of August and an increase of 25,000 tons of coal in the supply to the Ostland. The Reich Commissioner of Maritime Shipping has requested a decision by the Armaments Planning Office about priority ratings in regard to shipping tonnage. Since Swedish and Finnish shipping is no longer available, ore cargoes from Lulea and Oxeloesund will be restricted to German and Danish tonnage. Such shipping space however can be furnished only within narrow limits.

b. The fight for Le Havre has come to an end. At 0920 the Fortress Commander, Colonel Wildersmuth, who was severely wounded about this time, reported that during the night of 11 Sept. enemy attacks were repulsed by several islands of resistance, that heavy artillery and mortar fire was directed on our remaining positions, and that Cape de la Heve was occupied by the enemy. At 1032 the wireless transmitter Le Havre reported that tanks have reached the command post of the Fortress Commander; at 1040: "Heil the Fuehrer, Nation and Fatherland. Radio Personnel Le Havre."

c. Preparations for operation "Tanne Ost" at the Naval Command Baltic are being carried out. According to yesterday's directive by Naval Staff, Naval Command Baltic at first suggested the 16 Sept. as the day of execution. Upon request Naval Command Baltic proposes the dawn of 15

12 Sept. 1944

Sept. Admiral, Eastern Baltic receives instructions to take into account the mentality and the peculiarities of the Island Commander. He should try to draw the Commander and his garrison crew to our side through negotiations conducted by a capable officer or to move him to offer no or only formal resistance. In the event that negotiations are unsuccessful all resistance must be broken ruthlessly. In the execution of the task it can perhaps be reckoned with the aid of infantry forces - the 10.5 cm battery - and with units of the naval artillery battalions which will arrive from Pillau and Gdynia on time.

Since the evacuation date for Finland is 14 Sept. 2400, Naval Command Baltic has left it to Admiral, Eastern Baltic to start negotiations with the Island Commander in due time in order that the operation can be carried out in the early morning hours of 15 Sept. at the latest.

The Commander in Chief, Navy orders to make sure that the Naval Liaison Officer Hogland first begins the negotiations when the time has come. The Chief, Naval Staff conveys this order to the Commanding Admiral, Naval Command Baltic by telephone.

High Command, Air, Operations Staff reports that the anti-aircraft artillery and flying forces needed for the support of operation "Tanne Ost" will be furnished according to operational plans. Fighter protection for eventual defense of the island and for the escort of necessary transports is not possible due to lack of planes, especially fighters and due to the scarcity of fuel.

Naval Staff sends an excerpt from a directive by High Command, Air, Operations Staff to the Command, 1st Air Force, to Naval Command Baltic and Admiral, Eastern Baltic. There it reads under 3: "The 1st Air Force will support operation in cooperation with Admiral, Eastern Baltic." Under 4 it says: "According to latest reports the withdrawal of Finnish anti-aircraft guns must be expected. Participation of anti-aircraft batteries or anti-aircraft personnel respectively depends on the situation. Minimum strength at least one heavy and two light batteries."

Admiral, Eastern Baltic was directed by Naval Staff to clear particulars directly with the 1st Air Force and to report results.

The first transports for operation "Tanne Ost" are to leave German ports today. Naval Command Baltic reports that the departure of Naval Artillery Battalion 629 and 533, and staff of Island Commander as well as Port Commander with the necessary personnel from Gdynia, Pillau and Liepaja will take place today if at all possible. Copy of corresponding report as per "1/Skl 2875/44 Gkdos. Chefs. "in War Diary, C, III.

12 Sept. 1944

In regard to the evacuation of Finland by German ships, the Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff has decided that Kemi and Oulu will for the time being be defended by our combat groups. Therefore removal of transports can be continued even after 15 Sept. Ports in southern locations will not be protected. Therefore the most valuable supplies must be evacuated from there by 15 Sept. The treatment of Finnish ships depends upon the development of the political situation which cannot yet be foreseen.

d. The transfer of three foreign torpedoboats from the Adriatic Sea to the Aegean Sea planned by Group South appears, to be sure, to be justified numerically; but it involves a considerable risk in the face of the situation. The Admiral, Aegean Sea has therefore withdrawn his request for the assignment of the three boats after the situation was pointed out to him.

e. From monitored radiograms of the Fortress Commander in the La Rochelle area to Commanding General, West and Group West it was learned that possible negotiations with the French Commander, Meyer, are being considered. The Commander in Chief, Navy requests a report from Group West about this matter.

Special Items.

I. Eastern Baltic:

a. Concerning operation "Tanne Ost":

As to the situation on Hogland at 1900, 1st Lieutenant Mueller reports as follows:

"Today, ammunition, some searchlights and fuel were loaded. All the construction materials in the fortress have already been evacuated. There is no coastal artillery left in the southern part of the island. The heaviest artillery is a Russian 21 cm army battery in the northeastern part of the island. The Island Commander declared in the afternoon that no orders for complete evacuation have been received. The 4.5 cm anti-tank guns ready for evacuation are to be replaced by older 4.7 cm guns.

Naval Staff informs the Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters, Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Army General Staff and High Command, Air, Operations Staff about these facts.

12 Sept. 1944

Naval Command Baltic has ordered assemblage of the forces needed for the execution of operation "Schnellschluss" under pretext of a mining task north of Hogland in case of a Russian occupation. "Schnellschluss 1" designates the mining of waters west of Svensksund by four PT boats. "Schnellschluss 2 and 3" will be carried out by ferry barges with a group of PT boats and motor minesweepers as escort. The mining of the Helsinki-Porkkala route and of the Skerry passage proposed by the 9th Defense Division, is still held to be premature by Naval Command Baltic.

Naval Staff informs the Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters and Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Navy about the intention of Admiral, Eastern Baltic pointing out that mining will be carried out in Finnish territorial waters; this is necessary to prevent passage north of Hogland. The Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters is to report this to the Fuehrer.

Naval Command Baltic has further provided that the PRINZ EUGEN and vessels of the 2nd Torpedo Boat Flotilla will depart in due time in order that the formation will be cruising west of the barrage in the Gulf of Finland at dawn on 15 Sept. If necessary the formation will participate in operation "Tanne Ost". The task force will, during the time of the operation, be at the disposal of the Admiral, Eastern Baltic. Two torpedo boats of the 2nd Torpedo Boat Flotilla will escort the transporter MOLTKEFELS in the first wave. The 3rd Torpedo Boat Flotilla will leave for the north in the evening of 12 Sept. and will be put under the command of Admiral, Eastern Baltic.

Naval Staff instructs Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters, Army General Staff and High Command, Air, Operations Staff accordingly and adds that besides light naval forces of the 9th Defense Division, the 6th Destroyer Flotilla with three destroyers and the torpedoboats T "23" and "28" will be put into action for immediate defense and support of the landing.

b. Concerning operation "Birke"

High Command, Air, Operations Staff informs the Naval Staff that the Training Flight Commander, Baltic Sea, is charged with the reconnaissance needed for the protection of the "Birke" transports. Due to the fuel situation this air protection should be provided only - and then in cooperation with Naval Command Baltic - if the situation demands it and only by special order of the High Command, Air. Reconnaissance flight are, as far as possible, to be combined with training flights for the Commander, Submarines. An officer will be sent to Naval Command Baltic for

12 Sept. 1944

instruction about operation "Birke". The original plan that the 1st Squadron Replenishing Group Sea would provide the combat forces is cancelled.

Naval Liaison Officer at the 20th Mountain Army Command reports that the Belgian steamer YSER in Vaasa could be used for towing in the army command area. On 15 Sept. no forces will be available for demolition tasks in the evacuated harbors and areas.

At 1320 the Sea Transport Officer for the Armed Forces issues the following orders:

- "1. German ships in Finnish ports with the exception of Kemi and Oulu must have left Finnish territorial waters by 2400 on 14 Sept. A special order was issued by the Sea Transport Officer for the Armed Forces to German Maritime Shipping.
2. Evacuation of Kemi and Oulu is to be continued. Two more German ships will be sent to Kemi and Oulu.
3. Finnish ships with cargo for Germany are to be instructed to leave Finnish territorial waters on 13 Sept., at the latest on 14 Sept. Admiral, Eastern Baltic and 20th Mountain Army Command will assure the execution of this order."

Furthermore the Sea Transport Officer for the Armed Forces issues the following directive to Naval Command Baltic:

"The Armed Forces High Command ordered on 11 Sept. that Kemi and Oulu are to be defended for the time being by our combat groups. Most valuable supply goods are to be evacuated from ports located further south by 15 Sept. Since some Finnish ships with cargoes for Germany are still in Finnish ports, the attempt must be made to speed the departure of the ships in order that they are at sea in the evening of 14 Sept. and outside of the Finnish territorial waters. Admiral, Eastern Baltic, Sea Transport Office Finland, 20th Army Command and Naval Liaison Officer receive instructions for immediate execution of the order."

According to a report by Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, the 20th Mountain Army Command has arranged with the Finnish Headquarters that all ports, south of the latitude Oulu, will be evacuated by 2400 on 14 Sept. The port of Kemi is not included since it lies within the area of the Army Command. About 10,000 tons of supply belonging either to the Army, Air Force or Organization Todt are still in the harbor. The 20th Mountain Army Command has requested

12 Sept. 1944

that the High Command, Navy should furnish additional German tonnage to Kemi after 15 Sept. in order to evacuate these valuable German goods. Naval Staff will inform the 20th Mountain Army Command whether the tonnage and escort can be made available by the Navy under present conditions.

c. Naval Liaison Officer at the Army General Staff submits a new list carefully checked by the Army General Staff concerning the actual strength of the Northern Army Group as of 1 Aug. 1944. There are in all 610,276 men. Copy as per 1/Skl 2888/44 Gkdos. Chefs. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. III.

II. German Naval Command, Italy reports results of the conference with the Commanding General, West concerning the withdrawal to the Lower Alps. The time needed for a complete evacuation is calculated by the Navy to be two months, since the available trucking space is limited. Since it is a question of weeks however, according to the Commanding General, West it is therefore possible to evacuate only arms and equipment essential for combat. Crews and arms of vessels sunk and of steamers which will not be ready before the end of October are already being evacuated. About 14 days are needed for demolition measures and for the evacuation of the remaining forces. Naval Staff is requested to decide use of the vessels ready for action in the event of evacuation. It is proposed that all surplus personnel be put into ground combat at the wish of the Commanding General, Southwest after previous training by the Army. After taking up the Alpine position following the Etsch (Adige) line, about 4,000 men of the forces of the German Naval Command can be spared. After abandonment of Liguria but retainment of the North Adriatic Sea the German Naval Command feels that the German Naval Command and the Office of the Admiral, Adriatic Sea should be combined. This staff will likewise attend to all affairs of the Italian Navy.

Naval Staff agrees with the plans. Concerning use of war vessels for evacuation purposes, decisions must be based on the situation existing. The following instructions should serve for guidance:

- a. As long as there is any opportunity, damage must be inflicted on the enemy by offensive or defensive action; fight to the very end.
- b. If the evacuation of the harbors takes place in the course of planned withdrawal movements - without an attack by the enemy and without the possibility of combat - war vessels are to be demolished and scuttled.

12 Sept. 1944

Crews and weapons, if possible, are to be evacuated.

As to the intention of having available personnel participate in ground combat, the following is ordered as a guide:

Specialists (including coastal specialists) must be withdrawn and evacuated at all cost.

III. In answer to a directive by Naval Staff, Group South has submitted plans for mine barrages in the northern Adriatic Sea.

Naval Staff issues the directive that the submitted plans are solely of preliminary value. An average distance of 25 meters between mines in the Gulf of Trieste is recommended. The barrage must run, if the situation becomes serious, from coast to coast. Therefore only narrow gaps must be left which in case of an alert can be closed quickly. 300 more LMB/S mines with various types of fuses will be provided.

IV. From a radiogram sent by Group South to Admiral, Aegean Sea, Naval Staff learns the intention of Group South to put the Naval Shore Command Albania under the command of the Admiral, Aegean Sea. Copy of the radiogram as per l/Skl 28160/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Volume XIV. A request to Naval Staff must be awaited.

V. Reich Security Central Office relays a report of the Commander of the Security Police, Belgrade. It reads as follows:

"Spirit and conduct of Naval and Air Force units retreating from Bulgaria and Rumania were inexcusably bad. Morale very low; impression of complete demoralization. According to remarks reorganization will take place in Vienna. The spread of the spirit of demoralization must be feared. No willingness to fight the partisans. Many have never been in a combat area or seen fighting. It is very urgent that the armed forces commands in the Reich are informed."

Supplement by Military Office:

"Check-up and report by troop commanders appear to be very essential. The results of such inquiries are requested in order to inform Section VI about the real situation."

The matter is being taken care of by the Bureau of Naval Administration. The Chief of Staff, Group South reported by telephone that the affair has been presented in a distorted fashion, that the report is not based on facts. A report is promised.

12 Sept. 1944

CONFIDENTIAL

The Fuehrer has issued an order about measures to be taken in the southeastern area. Copy as per 1/Skl 28125/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. XIV.

Group South, German Naval Command, Italy and Admiral, Adriatic Sea are notified in writing.

Situation 12 Sept.

I. Situation West Area.

1. Enemy Situation:

34 planes of the 19th Group were confirmed in action. Four British vessels were located in the rendezvous area. The Army General Staff, Foreign Armies, West is of the opinion that the entire operation will be concentrated in the sector of the 2nd British Army. It can be assumed that the Army consists of 12 to 15 major units. The enemy probably intends to use the American forces for the purpose of tying down German forces along a broad front, while the 2nd British Army will advance into the Rhenish-Westphalian industrial area. The possibility of an operational coordination with the 1st Allied Airborne Army at disposal in England is pointed out.

2. Own Situation:

A. Western French Fortresses:

Brest:

According to the daily report of 12 Sept. by the Fortress Commander, enemy attacks especially in the western sector are being continued; some penetrations into the fortress combat area were made. These were either repulsed or mopped up in counterattacks. After destruction of most of the naval batteries including anti-aircraft guns, the artillery defense must now be provided by the Army. Communication lines are continuously being maintained by naval personnel. Brest, in every respect, resembles a pile of rubble. Even bombproof installations are gradually being eliminated. Such places are crowded with wounded. Highest demands are made on the medical personnel.

The Naval Shore Command reports that all the remaining equipment of the Torpedo Command and the Barrage Command has been destroyed

CONFIDENTIAL

12 Sept. 1944

The personnel has been put into action. Two 10.5 cm and one 8.8 cm guns in the fortress and two 10.5 cm guns of the naval anti-aircraft artillery in the southern sector can still be used. Available anti-aircraft artillery personnel is engaged in infantry combat and has suffered high casualties. Of the 100 men of Battery 3/805 only seven are left. In spite of the losses their fighting spirit is unbroken. Most of the naval personnel fight heroically in spite of incomplete training and poor equipment. The Naval Communications Officer and the radiomen received special praise from the Fortress Commandant.

The Fortress Commander, Lieutenant General Ramcke, reported about the situation in Brest at the time when he assumed command on 11 Aug. Among other things he said: "Fragments of naval units etc. are on the whole without fighting spirit and not accustomed to any hardship. A large part is completely useless. Desertions up to the strength of a platoon are a common occurrence. Even submarine crews, all young, vigorous fellows desert after a major attack lasting for several days since they are not used to the hardships of the infantry."

The Commanding Admiral, Submarines has investigated the matter. The Naval Shore Commander Bretagne reported after consultation with the Fortress Commander that the report on the situation was based on the real composition of the fighting troops. The naval soldiers who are not at all trained for ground combat cannot be compared with paratroopers. Weaklings and deserters can be found in all branches of the services. The majority of submarine soldiers are known to be physically fit and ready to fight. Not one entire formation of submarine crews is in combat. What could be made available was for the most part mannikin personnel and inexperienced reserves. So far only one small group surrendered in one place after the Submarine Flotilla Officer was killed and the troops were under the impression of being without a leader and encircled. The report by the fortress Commander was intended to show that there is a lack of trained and battle-hardened soldiers for defense. On this point there is complete agreement between General Ramcke and the Naval Shore Commander Bretagne. The General regrets that due to the wording of the report, a false impression about submarine soldiers has been created which was unintentional. At the request of the Commanding Admiral, Submarines the Fortress Commander has supplemented the contested report as follows:

"As far as naval personnel is concerned, the ship and ground units, who were by mistake reported as fighting under the common designation of 9th Submarine flotilla in the outer defense do not contain any submarine formations. Reports coming in from the outer fortress are unanimous in stating that the

12 Sept. 1944

members of submarine crews put into action have fought especially well."

Exchange of telegrams in War Diary Provisional File "Invasion 12 Sept."

Lorient: Successful combat patrols were carried out. Fourteen officers, 147 non-commissioned officers and 605 men of the personnel of the Commanding Admiral, Defenses West are fighting in the fortress.

From La Rochelle 50 tons of flour were transferred by sea to Gironde - North on 12 Sept.; 20 tons were given to Gironde-South. According to a report by Admiral, Atlantic Coast the supply of Gironde-South seems to be insufficient. Troops in Gironde-North executed a reconnaissance in force and repulsed the enemy who suffered considerably casualties. In all the impression exists that the enemy is daily reinforcing his troops. No special reports were received from other places.

B.- Channel Coast:

In the evening of 11 Sept. enemy fighter-bombers dropped about 900 bombs on Le Havre. The enemy entered the city with tanks from the east and northeast. The regimental command post was lost after a hand to hand fight. The fight is being continued without artillery, anti-aircraft and anti-tank guns.

At 0702 the Naval Shore Commander reported the destruction of the Batteries Cape de Le Heve and St. Adresse. A report about the events pertaining to the final battle has already been made at the conference with the Commander in Chief, Navy.

During the night of 12 Sept. a ction by means of special weapons is planned against the Kreuzschanz Lock in Antwerp. According to air reconnaissance by Naval Special Operations Unit 65 both locks on the side facing the Scheldt are closed and in their present condition immovable. Between the Scheldt and the lock four torpedo nets are suspended from long buoys. The Royer Lock is similarly damaged. The blowing up operations of the Kreuzschanz and Royer Bridge were carried out without special result. The outcome of the operation will depend upon the ability of battle swimmers to blow up and remove torpedo nets with special mines.

II. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

12 Sept. 1944

Heligoland Bight:

In the afternoon of 11 Sept. enemy planes presumably on mine laying missions were shelled by heavy anti-aircraft guns in the Woge and Norderney sectors. In the evening hours entering and returning planes were fired at in the region of Wilhelmshaven, Heligoland and Brunsbuettel.

At 0510 on 12 Sept. the patrol position IB was unsuccessfully bombed by enemy planes.

On the morning, entering and returning enemy formations were Shelled by naval anti-aircraft artillery in the Heligoland Bight. Numerous bombs were dropped without causing essential damage. About 1100 the petroleum area of Hemmingstedt was continuously attacked. During the night of 12 Sept. three mine exploding vessels, four minesweeping boats and six mine-clearance boats were on minesweeping missions between the Elbe, Weser and Ems Rivers up to Helder.

Holland Coast:

In the forenoon the Naval Anti-Aircraft Artillery Ameland brought down one plane. A low-flying attack on the radar station Terschelling remained without success.

At 1905 about 30 enemy planes raided objectives at the roadsteads and in the harbor of Helder as well as battery emplacements with bombs, torpedoes and gunfire. So far six planes were reported to have been shot down. Torpedo boat T "61" under construction had to be beached. Other damages and losses are slight.

Two mines were swept in the Schulpengat.

In the night of 11 Sept. the mine barrage SWKA was laid as planned. A fighter-bomber attack against the mine laying formation caused only slight damages and few casualties. One plane was destroyed.

On the morning one vessel of the 8th Gun Carrier Flotilla ran aground near Nordbeverland after an air raid; the personnel suffered casualties.

During the night of 12 Sept. minesweeping operations are planned between Hook of Holland and Helder; twelve vessels will participate. Furthermore it is contemplated that the convoys 1273 and 1275 will be conducted from Helder to Terschelling and from Helder to Borkum respectively.

CONFIDENTIAL

12 Sept. 1944

Scheldt:

In the afternoon of 11 Sept. an armed fishing vessel sank during an air raid on Breskens. Ferrying service was again restored at midnight of 11 Sept. There is only a limited amount of service during the night hours. No full use is being made of transportation space for personnel due to insufficient arrivals. At 1800 on 11 Sept. 4,000 men including the wounded, 600 vehicles and guns and numerous equipment had been ferried across the river. According to a report by Naval Command North the total result of 11 Sept. amounted to 7,000 soldiers.

About noon on 12 Sept. a vessel sank in the course of an air raid on Terneuzen and Veere. Bombs falling on the mine depot caused no damage. At 1500 the ferry traffic between Breskens and Flushing was again attacked by fighter-bomber without results. At 1530 a vessel was damaged in the course of an attack on Wemeldingen. An engineer motor boat had to be beached off Veere after being hit by a rocket. Off Terneuzen a hospital barge distinctly marked by the Red Cross sank quickly after a fighter-bomber attack. The ferry traffic was stopped in the evening in agreement with 15th Army Command.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:Enemy situation:

Thirty-three planes of the 18th Group were confirmed in action.

Own Situation:

Slight, at times lively exchange of fire in the Petsamo area was reported during the night of 10 Sept. In the night of 11 Sept. eleven enemy planes were detected in the Namsos-Mosjoen area presumably engaged in supplying agents.

At 1137.030 planes - presumably carrier based - attacked a southbound convoy north of Stadlandet. The patrol boat V "7307" sank after receiving a direct hit. Two more patrol boats had to be beached. The towed steamer OSTLAND (5,274 BRT) caught fire which was extinguished. The ship will be brought to Aalesund. Our casualties are considerable. Three planes were shot down. The Air Force assumes a carrier to be present in the area 80 miles west of Stadlandet according to locating devices. The convoy traffic between Maaloe and Bodoe is closed due to danger from carriers.

12 Sept. 1944

On 11 Sept. a sabotage hide-out on the island of Gransoe in the area of Admiral, West Coast was liquidated by the Port Command Maaloe. Two small one-man-electric boats, diving suits, camouflage and explosive material, among them adhesive mines, were secured.

In the evening of 11 Sept. the entire area of the west coast was reconnoitered by Mosquitoes.

Seventeen ships northbound and 19 ships southebound were escorted.

III. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

1. Enemy Situation:

At 0127 one of our submarines reported two vessels in the Gulf of Finland near Tyters Island on 110°. From the Army front concentrations are continuously reported with the center at Jelgava - Bauska.

2. Own Situation:

Admiral Skagerrak:

Patrol of the West Jutland coast was restricted on account of bad weather; the barrage gap at Hanstholm is not guarded.

In the declared area, numerous channel tests were made. The sea area of Aalborg Bight, off Aarhus, and the waters of the Great and Little Belt were closed since the presence of mines is suspected.

Western and Central Baltic Sea:

During the night of 11 Sept. about 60 to 80 four-engined enemy planes flew over northern Schleswig in the direction of Kiel and dropped demolition and incendiary bombs in the region of the Levensau and Holtenau bridges. The objectives were not damaged. However the Walther Works suffered heavy damages.

After the incursion of minelaying planes during the night of 12 Sept. minesweeping forces increased their activity. In all three mines were swept in the Pommeranian and in the Kiel Bay, Channels had to be ordered closed in the Kiel Mecklenburg and Pommeranian Bay as well as in the Stettin Haff and in the Danzig Bay.

12 Sept. 1944

Admiral, Eastern Baltic:

Due to weather conditions the formation assigned to the mining operation "Seeteufel" did not carry out the task contemplated for the night of 11 Sept. The net barrage Wulf-Nargoen was repaired and is again fully effective. Weather conditions made the repair of net barrage Makiluco impossible. On 11 Sept. the eastern net near buoy 31 broke and drifted about 1/ 1/2 miles to the east. Repair is being made.

Convoys and transports were carried out as planned and without incident. On 11 Sept. the Army Group North was supplied with 854 tons at Riga and with 1,461 tons at Reval; in addition 63 motor vehicles or guns were delivered.

There naval landing craft in Baltic Port, two in Reval and four PT boats in Baltic Port were loaded for mining operation "Schnellschluss".

IV. Submarine Warfare.

At 0630 Annapolis reported a submarine attack about 100 miles south of Cape Hatteras. - A returning submarine which had been in the operational area for 17 days reported the sinking of 14,000 BRT and two frigates.

In the Indian Ocean the submarine U"861" sank a freighter of 5,000 BRT, probably the steamer GANGES (6,246 BRT) about 250 miles northeast of Sansibar on 5 Sept. The watching of two ports on the east coast of Madagascar revealed that no ships were present.

In the Northern Waters two submarines left Narvik and entered the operational area.

No reports were received from the Gulf of Finland and the Mediterranean.

V. Aerial Warfare.

1. West Area:

During the day lively fighter-bomber and reconnaissance

12 Sept. 1944

activity was carried out over the entire Belgian-Dutch area. No attacks have been reported. Fifty enemy fighter-bombers carried out attacks against road objectives in the French-Italian border area.

During the night of 12 Sept. singly flying long distance night fighters were detected in the Dutch-Belgian area.

2. Reich Territory:

Planes flying in small formations entered the Reich territory from the west in the forenoon but did not carry out attacks of any importance. They penetrated in the southeastern direction as far as Saxony and Bohemia; they likewise flew over Danish territory.

A part of the strong bomber formations, entering Heligoland Bight with fighter escort, carried out the reported raid on Kiel. Other parts raided Magdeburg centering their attacks on the industrial areas and achieving considerable success. They then proceeded to the Leipzig-Dresden-Plauen area where four hydrogenating works were bombed; one of the works was rather heavily damaged while the other three received only light damage. The Leuna Works suffered heavy damage. A strong bomber formation, flying in by way of Luebeck and Mecklenburg and passing Berlin to the north and east, attacked Ruhland and other industrial places in Bohemia. Particulars have not yet been received. Likewise airfields in the Province of Brandenburg and some isolated places were attacked.

During the night of 12 Sept. 30 to 40 Mosquitoes attacked Berlin while twelve isolated planes flying over northern and southern Germany attacked airfields and landing planes with gunfire.

Several hundred bombers with fighter escort entered Bavaria from the south for raids on Munich and nearby airfields. In Munich medium heavy damage was inflicted on industrial objectives and transportation installations. For further particulars about these raids see "Situation of the Day."

On the afternoon several hundred bombers with fighter escort, entering the Rhenish-Westphalian industrial area via the Scheldt estuary, attacked the Hydrogenating Works at Scholven, the Krupp Works at Wanne-Eickel and other places. In the late afternoon Dortmund and Muenster were raided by strong formations.

3. Mediterranean Theater:

Enemy activities as usual.

12 Sept. 1944

On 12 Sept. four Ju 52 planes supplied Prahovo in Rumania and evacuated the wounded. One plane became a total loss due to artillery shelling from the Rumanian bank; two others took off in spite of the damage they had received.

4. East Area:

On 11 Sept. own and 2365 enemy flights were reported from the eastern front. Six planes were lost and eight shot down.

VI. Warfare in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

1. Area of German Naval Command Italy:

Enemy Situation:

At noon a large convoy consisting of 88 freighters and ten tankers, probably the scheduled GUS 51, passed through the Straits of Gibraltar making for the west.

According to an agent's report part of the harbor of Marseilles is said to be protected by barrage balloons. The reopening of the harbor will probably require six months. During the day the presence of a cruiser, several destroyers and minesweepers was confirmed in the coastal area between Nice and Ventimiglia. Cape San Martin and the area around Mortola were shelled from the sea. Our artillery forced the vessels to turn away.

Own Situation:

At midnight of 11 Sept. three combat ferries sailing from Spezia to Genoa were unsuccessfully attacked by torpedoes launched from the enemy planes. Three mine-clearance boats on patrol in the Gulf of Genoa and a landing craft convoy between San Remo and Genoa were likewise unsuccessfully attacked by enemy bombers. At noon of 11 Sept. the greater part of an ammunition dump at Spezia exploded after a fighter-bomber raid. The damage cannot yet be estimated.

2 Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea: On 12 Sept. Rimini was repeatedly shelled by ground artillery as well as raided from the air. On the afternoon Riccione and Rimini were shelled from the sea by

12 Sept. 1944

two destroyers and three minesweepers.

North of Rimini 28 more mines were laid by naval landing craft. Another mining operation was carried out southeast of Venice by the minelaying KIEBITZ and two submarine chasers. Supplementary it was reported that a harbor defense vessel ran into a mine barrage off Cesenatico and became a total loss.

Action by PT boat flotillas during the night of 11 Sept. had to be postponed owing to the weather. A "Siebel" ferry on a mining operation in the lagoons of the Tagliamento estuary was set afire by an explosion.

b. Aegean Sea: On 11 Sept. at noon Kephallonia was evacuated by our troops. An enemy mine barrage was confirmed between Kephallonia and Prevesa.

In the attack on convoy submarine chaser "2142" three planes were downed.

Admiral, Aegean Sea reported as a "Leander" report that the mining operations off the Thracian ports were started according to plan.

The defense of the Nauplia Bay was reinforced by an additional infantry battalion.

c. Black Sea:

Danube Situation: In the afternoon of 12 Sept. the Combat Group "Stelter" was shelled by the enemy between kilometers 873 and 882. A tug was heavily damaged. On a naval landing craft all guns and, on a gun carrier almost all guns were inactivated. Fifty per cent of the crews are either dead or wounded. The Combat Group was in action in order to cover the landing of a naval company and of a battalion of Russian fighting on the German side.

The Combat Group "Rehe" received orders to bring female assistants and wounded to Prahove; from there they will be moved farther to the rear by transport planes. Two gun carriers were slightly damaged while giving fire support in the Moldava area. By order of Commanding General, Southeast all anti-aircraft guns stationed down river from Belgrade are to be removed and to be used for the defense of airfields. Anti-aircraft artillery will remain only in Gradiste and Moldava. One tug and a barge struck mines and were damaged.

12 Sept. 1944

VII. Situation East Asia.

Japanese Homeland:

From the beginning of the month until 10 Sept. no new air raids have taken place on the Japanese homeland. Political relations with Portugal remained tense due to the Timor controversy.

Marianas:

No positive reports were received about the situation on Tinian and Guam. In the last days of August fighting on these islands was still observed from Rota. On 3 Sept. an American task force consisting of carriers, cruisers and destroyers attacked Rota. No reports about results of this attack.

Bonin Islands:

On 31 Aug., 1 Sept. and 3 Sept. the Bonin Islands were attacked by a U.S. task force with carriers and about 40 planes; the islands were also shelled by naval guns on 1 Sept. Damage resulting therefrom was slight.

Southwest Pacific:

Enemy operations against island bases are continuously taking place. On 2 Sept. air raids were made against Nauru, Yap, the Milli Atoll, Takao on Formosa, Davao on Mindanao and Palau. On 3 Sept. a U.S. task force consisting of carriers, cruisers and destroyers was in action against Wake, Truk, Ponape and Mang. On 6 Sept. Bougainville was again bombed; on the same day Palau was attacked by an American task force consisting of four battleships and carriers with about 600 planes. A task force of one battleship and carriers and about 200 planes attacked Yap.

Landing operations on the two islands may have followed; however they have not been confirmed so far. On 7 Sept. Hamahera, Timor, Mindanao, the Marianas, the Markus and Marshall Islands were bombed by U.S. air forces. The number of American planes engaged in these raids is given by the Japanese as follows:

Carolinas 132, Marshall Islands 78, Nauru 34, Rabaul and Salomones 450, Kavieng 182, Halmahera 283, Manokwari 228; others 348.

This confirms a considerable increase of Allied air forces in the Southwest Pacific area. The Japanese expect early operations in the westerly direction against the Moluccas and Philippines via New Guinea and the Admiralty Islands.

12 Sept. 1944

New Guinea:

On 2 Sept. a heavy air raid took place on Japanese positions near Manokwari. The remaining still unoccupied islands of the Shouten Group were occupied by the Americans without meeting resistance.

Indian Ocean:

In the course of an attack by an enemy combat group on Padang on 24 Aug. a cement factory was hit according to Japanese reports; slight damage was caused in the harbor. On 2, 3, 7, and 8 Sept. air raids took place on Timor and Celebes.

Burma:

North Burma has for the present been abandoned by the Japanese. The Japanese forces are withdrawing to their starting positions along the Chindwin River. The city of Sittang was occupied by the Allies on 4 Sept. According to an American report the Japanese line in Burma runs now 30 miles north of Tiddim and 160 km south of Imphal. The Allies advanced 30 miles in the direction of Mandalay by way of Mogaung.

China:

American forces in China number at present about 30,000 men. They were transported by air from India and are engaged in training Chinese air borne troops and mechanized formations. They are likewise to bolster the Chinese front. Japanese attacks along the North-South Railroad are slowed up by weather conditions. The Japanese reached the city of Kiang and occupied the city and airfield of Linling on 7 Sept. The Japanese state that the U.S. losses of planes in the Chinese sector during the period of 21 to 31 Aug. amount to 89 planes; six Japanese planes were lost. On 8 Sept. the first American air raid was carried out on Manchukuo, aimed at industrial objectives in the places Anshan and Antung. On 9 Sept. Japanese planes attacked the American airfield at Chengtu, brought down six planes in aerial fights and destroyed 28 on the ground; six Japanese planes were lost.

13 Sept. 1944

Items of Political Importance.

Nothing to report.

Conference with the Commander in Chief, Navy at 1135.

I. In the course of the report on the air situation Naval Staff, Operations Division, Naval Air and Air Force Liaison reports about an information in the possession of Air Force, Operations Staff, Chief of Operations Branch. According to an agent's report, the 1st Allied Airborne Army consisting of two British and three American divisions will be transferred to France. Radio monitoring revealed that the bulk of the 9th U.S. Troop Transport Corps and the 38th British Transport Division has already arrived in France. According to Army reports landings of numerous freight gliders with troops were observed on 12 Sept. in the Neufchateau area. Photographic reconnaissance of the Thames estuary, of Lowestoft and Yarmouth did not reveal any landing preparations in Great Britain. The Air Force, Operations Staff feels that a different situation has been created for the North Sea area as the result of the withdrawal of the 1st Airborne Army and the lack of landing space in southeastern England. The danger for the Heligoland Bight and the more northerly area has decreased considerably. Agent reports about contemplated landings in Jutland - mostly originating in diplomatic circles - must be regarded as reports intentionally spread. The enemy evidently is now concentrating on the decisive push across the German western border. Chief, Operations Staff has asked for the opinion of the Naval Staff, especially in regard to the threat of a landing in the Heligoland Bight and on Jutland based on the new observations.

Commander in Chief, Navy does not base his anxiety concerning Jutland and the Heligoland Bight on the agent report but on an evaluation of the over-all situation. He sees the chief attraction for such an enemy operation in the decisive strategical possibilities. The threat of such an operation in the decisive strategical possibilities. The threat of such an operation grows all the greater the more our west front becomes consolidated. Even the late season of the year is no obstacle, since it is to be expected that the enemy will not force a landing along the west coast of Jutland but will breakthrough the Skagerrak and land on the east coast.

According to Foreign Armies West, the use of freight gliders on the west front in the Toul area does not need to be regarded as a confirmation of the transfer of the Airborne Army. Air reconnaissance solely confirmed the moving of the Transport-

13 Sept. 1944

tation Corps. This was possible done for reasons of supply for the armored units and for the elimination of possible critical situations. At present the Airborne Army in southeastern England is without its Transportation Corps not able for action against other areas.

The absence of shipping space in southeastern England is not of decisive importance. An operation against Jutland does not need to start from southeastern England; there is a greater possibility that the concentration of ships would take place farther north, for instance in the Firth of Forth. The transfer of combat troops to the beforementioned place could in case of need be effected within a considerably short time. In any case the absence of shipping space in southeastern England must not be regarded as final proof that an operation in the direction of Jutland is not being considered by the enemy.

On the whole, the material gathered so far about the Airborne Army and the absence of shipping space in southeastern England does not permit the conclusion that the threat to the North Sea area up to Jutland has now been removed.

A corresponding opinion will be submitted to High Command, Air Operations Staff, Operations Branch, Navy by telegram.

II. In regard to the situation existing in the west, Naval Staff, Operations Division, Chief of Operations Branch point out:

The 1st Defense Division is using parts of the 38th Mine-sweeper Flotilla, en route from Le Havre to the east, for action in Zeeland area. A new group of armed fishing vessels has already been transferred. Now one of the two drifters groups is also being claimed. Thus the nucleus of the flotilla hardened in steady combat is broken up. In addition, drifters are unfit for use of rivers due to their draught and to their small cooling water intake. Furthermore the condition of the ships and machines makes their immediate use for combat impossible.

The holding of the 2nd Defense Division, en route to the east, was essential for the Scheldt ferrying traffic. Naval Staff had given permission to Admiral, Netherlands to fall back on suitable vessels in the Holland area. The intended transfer to the east and reassignment will be adhered to as planned. Admiral, Netherlands will release the vessels as soon as the situation permits.

Commander in Chief, Navy orders to direct the attention of the

13 Sept. 1944

Admiral, Netherlands to the importance of the area north of Breda which must be defended under all conditions, in order to keep up communication between Rotterdam and Walcheren.

III. In regard to the Mediterranean situation: The Fuehrer has approved the following withdrawals; Staff of the Commander of the fortress Crete, the personnel of the 133rd Infantry Division, the fighting units of the Air Force and Navy on Crete, Staff of the Commander, East Aegean Sea and the personnel of the Fortress Infantry Battalion 1001 and 1002 on Rhodes. The defense and supply troops remaining on the island are to be grouped into alert units and to be used for the defense of the strong points proposed by Commanding General Southeast.

Naval Staff directed Admiral, Aegean Sea, and for information Group South to report intentions concerning Naval Shore Commander, Crete.

Naval Staff, Operations Division, Chief of Operations Branch reports that figures concerning evacuation transport of the Navy for the Aegean Sea have not yet been received. The evacuation by sea is made difficult by the mine situation between Euboea and the continent as well as by the unusually bad weather. It is therefore contemplated to have fast ships, coming from the south sail only to Piraeus or Volos; from there troops will be evacuated by rail.

According to a "Leander" report of 12 Sept. the fuel supply for air transports is only sufficient for 1,500 flights; about 20,000 men could thus be transported. The Army Group E has therefore ordered that every vacant space aboard is to be used fully for transport of personnel.

The reinforcing of the naval base at Salonika is being carried out as planned. The mining operations off the Thracian ports are being carried out.

Regrouping of the fortress Crete will take four to eight weeks.

IV. Rear Admiral Brinckmann is now in the Nish area.

V. Naval Staff, Chief of Naval Intelligence Division: According to a report by Reich Security Central Office from Athens absolute quiet is reigning there. The first troops from evacuated islands have passed the area.

The armistice treaty between Rumania and the Allies was signed in Moscow on 12 Sept.

13 Sept. 1944

Reports about the participation of Hull and Eden in the Quebec conference are now being denied.

VI. Naval Staff, Operations Division, Mine Warfare Section:
Report about the mining of the Heligoland Bight and Jutland:

1. Heligoland Bight:

a. Ground mine barrages as alert barrages are contemplated for the estuaries of German rivers. Mines and mine carriers are ready on the Ems, Elbe, Jade and Weser rivers. Mine carriers, harbor defense vessels and smoke screen carriers are not suitable for use in the open sea.

b. Rope-anchored mine barrages: Naval Command North Sea proposes to lay EMC mine barrages at Borkum, Heligoland and Sylt within the range of our coast artillery for the protection of island batteries and for the unhampered movements of our ships near the coast. Mines required: 1,200 EMC and the necessary means for barrage protection. The allotment of about half of this number is possible at the end of October. Details of plans have not yet been worked out.

c. KMA mines: KMA barrages are intended for Borkum, Langeoog, Spiekeroog, Wangerooge, Heligoland, Eiderstedt and Sylt. Mines have been laid near Borkum, Heligoland and Sylt. KMA production at Cuxhaven and KMA mine laying is being delayed due to the fact that the mine carriers needed are presently engaged in the Scheldt area. The operation is being endangered since five mine ferrying barges on the Scheldt river are being battered up by the enemy.

2. Western Jutland:

a. KMA mine barrages were laid from the island Roem along the west coast of Jutland up to off Thyboroen. Entrances to the harbors are to be closed by alert barrages.

b. Ground mines for the fouling of the waters north of Nordmannstief have already been laid, another mining north of Normannstief, off Fanoe, is planned as an alert measure in case of danger.

c. Rope-anchored mine barrages: Not contemplated at present.

3. Skagerrak: The reinforcing of the Skagerrak declared area by two barrages in the south was completed in August; the laying of three more barrages, one in the center of the

13 Sept. 1944

eastern boundary of the declared area, one in the center of the northern boundary, and one on the northwestern boundary is just about to be carried out. Required number of mines: 1,400 EMC, 500 EMF, 700 EMR. Further enlargement of barrages is contemplated during the coming month. The mining of the passage gap at Hanstholm with ground mines is planned; mines and mine carriers are in readiness at Thyboroen.

4. East Jutland Coast and Baltic Sea Entrances:

a. KMA mine barrages: The laying of KMA mine barrages at Frederikshavn is going on; 360 KMA mines have been laid; a KMA barrage is intended along the entire east coast up to Aarhus as well as on the north coast of Zealand. 25,000 mines are required; production of mine cases in Esbjerg; filling with explosives at Frederikshavn and Aarhus. The setting-up of a second production place on Zealand is provided in case the delivery of parts can be increased. Additional mine laying vessels will be necessary.

b. Ground mine barrages: The ground mine barrages in the Aalback Bay have been laid with the exception of the northern part which is to be closed in case of an alert. Another ground mine barrage is planned near Seelandsriff at the northern exit of the Belts. The laying of mines along the net barrages Belt, with the exception of the passage gap which would have to be closed at an alert, will be carried out in the coming month. Ground mine barrages Sound, North, including Swedish territorial waters, are being prepared in the case of an alert, but may, to be sure, be laid only by special orders of Naval Staff. Mines can be made available from current production. At present difficulties exist in regard to the procurement of mines with alert carriers.

c. Rope-anchored mine barrages: At present not intended. The bottleneck, as far as the execution of these operations is concerned, is the question of mine laying vessels. This matter is now being taken care of by the Naval Staff. The Commander in Chief, Navy orders that inland shipping vessels suitable for the laying of KMA barrages are to be considered. A corresponding directive was sent to Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division.

Conference in a Restricted Circle:

VII. Army Situation:

1. Western Front:

Combats and movements of the 15th Army came off considerable

13 Sept. 1944

slower than anticipated; however, on the whole, they were carried out as planned in spite of very strong enemy air-force activity.

Ferrying services across the Scheldt can apparently be carried out only at night and in the morning mist.

The enemy reached the area south of Aachen and advanced to the east by way of Eupen and Malmedy.

The cooperation of the inner flanks of the British and American Army groups becomes more and more apparent. The enemy evidently has the intention to advance on both sides of the Maas to the north as far as possible, then north of the extended West Wall to turn east towards the Rhenish-Westphalian industrial area. The defense front there had to be withdrawn to the Maas-Scheldt Canal.

2. Calais and Dunkirk:

At Army Group "G" the enemy advanced closer to the German-Luxembourgian border. Near Trier the West Wall was attacked by 200 bombers. Diedenhofen appears to have been taken by the enemy.

South of Pont a Mousson the enemy succeeded in advancing to the eastern bank of the Moselle. The situation southwest of Luneville is not yet clear. The started counterattack did not yet take effect due to the fuel scarcity.

Strong enemy forces, supplied by air, are advancing in the direction of Epinal.

3. Enemy Situation:

The concentration of all American formations at present in southern England, in the Southampton area was confirmed.

Two capture reconnaissance pictures of the Wesel-Gelsenkirchen-Kemen-Duelmen area and of the Hamelin and Teutoburger Wald area taken for the 2nd British Army fighting in Belgium, point to the contemplated direction of the thrust of this army. The 9th American Army appears to have been transferred from England to France.

4. Italian Front:

In the area of the 14th Army the enemy continued his attacks but was, after at times hard fighting repulsed in every place.

13 Sept. 1944

5. Balkan Peninsula:

The withdrawal movements on the Peloponnesos and on the island of Crete are still being carried out without trouble. The evacuation of the islands of Chios and Mytilene was completed. The partisan and transport situation in the entire area is as difficult as ever.

In Macedonia the Bulgarian enemy is defending Prilep.

The seriousness of the situation caused by the outbreak of hostilities between Bulgarian and German troops compels the use of all available forces.

In the Serbian area weak enemy attacks near Svinita along the Danube were repulsed.

From Vidin on the Danube, Russian forces are advancing toward the Timok.

Our reconnaissance troops advancing east of Belgrade and from the area of Fehertemplon in the direction of Temesvar, met Rumanian forces.

According to Foreign Armies East the enemy will, with the forces of the 3rd Ukrainian Army, put the entire Bulgarian territory quickly under strict military control in order to accelerate the political transformation along Soviet lines, to get a firm grip on the newly acquired territory on the Balkan Peninsula and to make use of this territory for further operations. Whether these operations will be directed to the south (Aegean Sea) or to the west (Adriatic Sea) cannot yet be recognized since the forces are spread over a broad front.

6. Eastern Front:

Army Group Southern Ukraine:

South of Cluj the enemy achieved several additional penetrations in the course of strong attacks which were supported by tanks. The front lines had to be taken back.

The 6th Army is carrying out the withdrawal movements according to plan in spite of signs of fatigue on the part of the troops and of the difficult mountain terrain.

13 Sept. 1944

Army group Northern Ukraine:

All day long the enemy continued his break-through attempts south of Sanok and near Krosno with superior forces supported by tanks, heavy artillery and planes. In spite of fierce defense he succeeded in crossing the San south of Sanok.

In the break-through area of Krosno, numerous enemy attacks were repulsed in hard fighting. In the operational area of eastern Slovakia our forces took possession of the area west-northwest of Ruzomberok.

North of Sandomir our attack aimed at removing the enemy bridgehead near Jozefow resulted in only slight gains of territory due to increasing enemy resistance.

Central Army Group:

Heavy fighting ensued near Warsaw. The enemy broke through our main defense line and advanced to the eastern limits of Praga. In the evening the enemy extended his attacks to new fronts. He again forced his way into Praga. Heavy fighting with high losses is going on.

- Northern Army Group:

The concentration of enemy forces in front of the Northern Army Group points to the fact that the enemy at present wants to achieve above all a decisive success against the Northern Army Group, even postponing other intended attacks.

Naval Staff, Naval Intelligence Division holds the same opinion as the Army General Staff, Foreign Armies West concerning the transfer of the air transport equipment of the 1st Allied Airborne Army to France. It appears that in all probability the supply by air of the enemy army - having quickly advanced to the east - especially with fuel has become necessary. There is no confirmation that the airborne troops have been put into action. Major operations - possibly in Holland, Heligoland Bight, Denmark, etc. - are not to be expected for the present since the troops will be used elsewhere.

Naval Staff, Naval Intelligence Division has informed the higher naval operation staffs explicitly about this evaluation of the enemy situation. Copy as per 1/Skl, 28 314/44 Gkdos. in War Diary: Part D, Vol. 8a.

13 Sept. 1944

VIII. The Commander in Chief, Navy reports that according to a definite statement made by Reichsminister Speer the nickel from Petsamo does not play anymore the decisive role in our armament industry as it did at an earlier date. Under the circumstances the question of evacuating of at least parts of the 20th Mountain Army by way of the Baltic Sea is to be checked. Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Shipping and Transport Branch is to receive a corresponding order and will clear this question immediately.

IX. Designated Chief, Naval Staff, Operations Division, Commander Oehrn reports about the wish of the Commanding Admiral, Naval Command Norway who is planning to change the organization set-up of the Commander, Submarines in his area. Since in the present situation the defensive tasks are of prime importance, the submarines assigned to the northern area must primarily serve defense purposes and will particularly take over the tasks of providing the necessary air reconnaissance. Long termed and extended offensive operations as are now being carried out in the Kara Sea are likely to lead to complications. The Commanding Admiral, Naval Command Norway therefore considers it best that the Commander, Submarines be placed under his command.

The Chief, Naval Staff considers it inevitable that the two command posts exist side by side.

Naval Staff, Chief of Submarine Division points to the unfavorable experiences which have been gained by putting the Commander, Submarines, Norway under the command of Group North.

Therefore Naval Staff, Chief of Operations Division suggests placing the Commander, Submarines under the command of Naval Command Norway provided however that the operations in the Norway area assume a purely defensive character.

Commander in Chief, Navy absolutely rejects the proposal. As long as the offensive war has not ceased completely, placing the submarines under another command is absolutely out of the question. One attempt of such a nature was made in the past and turned out to be a complete failure. At present Norway faces no defensive tasks and those that exist cannot be solved by submarines.

X. Naval Staff, Special Weapons Division reports about the combat possibilities of the small battle weapons in the Danish-Norwegian coastal area. The jagged, long coast line offers numerous possibilities for action. However the few roads restrict the supply and movements of the flotillas considerably. Formations, once in action in Norway can only

13 Sept. 1944

be moved with difficulty; they therefore would not be available for other theaters of war. If the idea of using small battle weapons in Norway can only be moved with difficulty; they therefore would not be available for other theaters of war. If the idea of using small battle weapons in Norway is to be considered seriously, then the immediate organization of an Operations Staff Norway for checking and preparation is held to be necessary. Measures in regard to infantry protection, camouflaging, and care of the equipment would have to be taken without delay.

Commander in Chief, Navy orders the immediate set-up of the proposed Operations Staff.

XI. Naval Staff, Chief of Operations Division: Admiral, Eastern Baltic proposes 15 Sept. 0200 as the day for the execution of operation "Tanne Ost" in order that the landing can take place prior to the demolition actions in Finland, e.g. the blowing-up of airfield installations at Pori which may cause trouble. The operation depends to a high degree on the weather; therefore it is possible that at the beginning minesweeping boats only will be able to make landings. It is important that troops are landed suddenly and quickly on 15 Sept. The evacuation of the Naval Liaison Officer is to be used as an excuse for the first landing. The first wave will consist of the Naval Artillery Battalion 531 (detached from the Army), a company of commandos, Assault Boat Commandos 902 and 903 as well as the units of the Army which are being taken aboard at Riga on 13 Sept.

The sooner the landing takes place, the less material the Finns will be able to remove. It is not necessary to wait for the transport steamer MOLTKEFELS. Naval Artillery Battalion 533 and 629 will form the second wave. The guns can only be transported on naval landing craft; their use depends on the weather. The 15 cm guns which have to be mounted on concrete foundations will not be ready for firing before the end of six weeks.

Naval Staff proposes to Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff, Army General Staff, high Command, Air, Operations Staff and Naval Command Baltic and for information of the Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters the 15 Sept. as the final day. Landing time will be at 0200 with the qualification that the first landing will be made by forces already in the Baltic area; Naval Artillery Battalions from the area Gdynia will represent the second wave.

The Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff has issued the proper order for the day of execution.

According to a telephone report by Admiral, Eastern Baltic, further requests have not been made by his Operations Staff

13 Sept. 1944

for the execution of this operation. The transfer to Hogland will be carried out by the 13th Training Flotilla and 40 assault boats; in addition participation of three naval landing craft is planned.

Commander in Chief, Navy orders that ruthless execution of the operation - once it is started - must likewise be assured by the partaking Army troops.

Chief, Naval Staff has instructed Admiral Kummetz accordingly. Commanding Admiral, Eastern Baltic was instructed likewise. The command of the landing operation is in the hands of Captain (Navy) Mecke. Naval Artillery Battalion 531 will be under the command of Captain Hosfeld.

Commander in Chief, Navy issues to the Commanding Admiral, Eastern Baltic, and likewise to Captain (Navy) Kothe and Captain (Navy) Mecke, with copy to Naval Command Baltic and 9th Defense Division the following order:

"The hasty preparations for the execution of operation "Tanne Ost" - necessitated by circumstances - impose a task on the troops which demands determination and adaptability. The possibility that the Finns may not resist cannot be taken for granted. We must solely rely on our determination to achieve the goal even in the face of hard resistance and great casualties. Even soldiers not used to the sea, especially troop commanders of other branched of the armed forces must be aware of this. The importance of the operation lies in the fact that the island is the key position in the Gulf of Finland. It is of great importance for our future plans but its possession is, above all, of special value to the enemy for it will open the Baltic Sea to Russian naval warfare. I expect that commanders, formations, and soldiers will do their utmost to solve the given task and will then prepare and maintain the defense."

Special Items:

I. Concerning the Eastern Baltic.

a. Operation "Tanne Ost":

Admiral, Eastern Baltic reported that as the result of a conference with the Air Force the following formations will participate: One heavy anti-aircraft battery of 8.8 cm guns from Baltic Port; one light anti-aircraft battery of twelve 2 cm guns from Baltic Ports; one light anti-aircraft battery from Reval and six searchlights. In all about 400

13 Sept. 1944

men. Likewise two combat squadrons and twelve fighters from Wesenberg.

It has been ordered that Naval Artillery Battalion 531 be detached from the Army. Just before going aboard in Riga, differences with the Army must apparently have occurred. The Army agrees to the transfer of an Army coastal battery to Moldowa.

Naval Command Baltic reports about the state of preparations for operation "Tanne Ost" as of the forenoon of 13 Sept.:

1. The motorship MOLTKEFELS departed from Gdynia for Reval by way of Pillau on 12 Sept. at 2200 escorted by torpedo boats T "8" and T "12" with 866 men, ten 15cm and nine 2 cm guns, eight searchlights, etc.
2. The vessel "R022" left Liepaja for Reval on 12 Sept. at 2250 having aboard the Special Command Schoenherr in strength of 215 men.
3. Net tenders and net layers departed from Baltic Port for position "Rotbuche" in the early morning of 13 Sept. to take up nets and buoys.
4. 3rd Torpedoboot Flotilla with T "13", "17", "18", "19" and "20" left Gdynia for Liepaja on 12 Sept. 2300.
5. The PRINZ EUGEN with the 2nd Torpedoboot Flotilla T "1", "4", "5", "9" and "10" intends to depart from Gdynia early on 14 Sept. Position at 0500 - AO 9579, at 1000 - AO 9253, at 1500 - AO 5698, at 2100 - AO 6121.
6. For operation "Bottensee" three submarines from the Gulf of Finland have been assigned.
7. In case of the 3rd Torpedoboot Flotilla is not needed for operation "Tanne Ost" its participation in escorting convoys from Kemi and Culu is planned.
8. Since mobile coastal batteries are essential for operation "Tanne Ost" and since the emplacement of the naval guns on rocky ground requires a long time, temporary assignment of the Battery "Moldowa" with four 17 cm guns and Army Coastal Battery 921 with four 10.5 cm guns has been requested. Return to their present position will be made as soon as the naval guns are in place."

At 1200 two 7.5 cm field cannons, together with ammunition, fuel, three four-barreled machine guns and construction

13 Sept. 1944

material were loaded by the Finns for shipment from Hogland. According to information given by the Finnish Major Ettlander half of the Finnish ammunition will be evacuated by the evening of 13 Sept. In the harbor six 4.5 cm anti-tank guns are ready for evacuation. The same number of old 4.7 cm coastal guns is held ready for exchange. 350 artillery men have left the island. According to a declaration by the Island Commander, Finland would probably cede the island to Germany once peace has come.

b. Concerning treatment of Finnish ships:

Naval Command Baltic, North and Norway receive a directive how to instruct offices under their command concerning the treatment of Finnish ships.

Naval Command Baltic notifies Naval Staff about a directive issued to offices under its command that, beginning at once, the departure of Finnish ships must be prevented under suitable pretext and that the seizure of Finnish ships must be prepared. Copy of corresponding directive as per "1/Skl 2912/44 Gkdos." in War Diary, Part C, Vol. III.

Naval Office Danzig reports that the unloading of five Finnish ships with German evacuation goods destined for Danzig is being delayed.

II. Concerning Distribution of Naval Forces.

Naval Command North reports that six of the nine naval landing craft of the 11th and 12th Training Flotillas retained by Special Staff Knuth, are at present out of commission. In addition 18 artillery ferry barges of the 2nd and 8th Gun Carrier Flotillas are engaged in escort and anti-aircraft defense of the Scheldt and the Dutch inland waters. Here, too, some losses and casualties have occurred and more are to be expected. Mine laying naval landing craft until recently engaged in the KMA mine operations in Holland and the Heligoland Bight, were sent to the Scheldt; thus the KMA mine operations were brought to an end; Naval Command North requests replacements.

Naval Staff decides:

"1. After a thorough check-up it was found that the assignment of naval landing craft from other areas is not possible due to the lack of available forces and long distances involved.

2. Use of all suitable forces by Special Staff Knuth is justified due to the situation and is therefore approved.

13 Sept. 1944

3. Total number of mine laying naval landing craft is exceedingly small. For the present there are no replacements to be expected out of new construction. The three mine laying naval landing craft from the area of Commanding Admiral, Defenses West and the five which were assigned to Commanding Admiral, North Sea are intended to be used not only for KMA mine operation in the Heligoland Bight but also from KMA and other barrage tasks planned in the Baltic approaches. They are likewise to be used for alert barrages in the Oslo Fjord.

Therefore:

4. As soon as the Scheldt situation does permit, at least a small number (about three) of the mine laying naval landing craft are to be withdrawn. This should be reported to Naval Staff.

5. Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division is checking on the suitability of inland shipping vessels for replacement."

Situation 13 Sept.

I. Situation West Area.

1. Enemy Situation:

Thirty four planes of the 19th Group were detected on missions. Four British vessels were located in the rendezvous area.

2. Own Situation:

A. Western French Fortresses:

Brest: According to the report of 12 Sept. by the Naval Shore Commsander the harbor installations have been destroyed completely. In agreement with the fortress commander the submarine shelters were not blown up due to the proximity of the hospital tunnel. Installations and machines are demolished; berths are being blocked by the scuttling of vessels and partially blown up. Two 7.5 cm guns of Battery "Kerbonne" were put out of action by a direct hit.

Our defense posts and strong points are being rendered inactive by continuous air raids and direct shelling. In the ruins of the city uncontrolled fires are raging caused by enemy shelling, air raids and demolitions.

On 13 Sept. the fortress commander reported continuous enemy attacks made by much superior forces especially in the western part of the fortress. They resulted in penetrations into the fortress combat area proper in spite of desperate resistance.

13 Sept. 1944

Closing of the gaps was achieved. Heavy fighting continues. In the eastern part of the fortress the main defense line was held in hard combats. High casualties and material losses are caused due to the narrowness of the combat area within the encircled fortress.

The strong point Audierne is encircled by partisans. The demand to surrender - repeated for the ninth time - was ignored.

At 1400 the Fortress Commander Brest reports to the Fuehrer by radiogram as follows: "My Fuehrer, I am reporting as of 1200 of 13 Sept.: Repeated demands for surrender by the Commanding General of the 8th American Army Corps, Major General Troyh. Middleton have been ignored.

The struggle has reached its climax. The great material superiority of the enemy has caused the destruction and inactivation of the fortifications, of most of the Navy arms and especially of all the guns. Remnants of the fortress garrison are fighting in the ruins of the city and fortress to the bitter end, true to their oath. The fortified Corzon Peninsula has so far not been subjected to severe ground attacks. Hail to my Fuehrer! Ramke."

It is planned that three He's will supply Brest during the night of 13 Sept. Likewise the supply of Royan and Lorient by one plane each is intended.

During the night of 12 Sept. a supply convoy was carried out between La Pallice and Royan.

The garrison of Fort Chapus (opposite Aleron) was withdrawn during the night of 12 Sept. due to increasing supply difficulties in the face of enemy artillery reinforcements on the island. In the morning of 13 Sept. Fort Chapus was occupied by the enemy. Since the supply of Gironde-North primarily takes place on indirect routes there was no particular reason for the defense of this fort.

During the night of 11 Sept. five supply containers with Panzerfaust (Anti-tank weapons - Tr.N.) and newspapers were dropped on Oleron.

On the evening of 11 Sept. an enemy destroyer was shelled by Battery "Ars" located on the island of Re.

The Fortress Commander Gironde-North reported that his already weak garrison of 3,700 men has 300 members of category 3 of "Racial Germans" sever of which have already deserted. Therefore the transfer of 300 German soldiers by air to Royan with complete close combat equipment is requested. By the same means the 300 "Rachial Germans" are to be removed.

13 Sept. 1944

B. Ground Situation:

According to a report by Group West at 1800, 12,000 Naval troops have so far passed the Doubs Valley to the east coming from the Atlantic and South Coast.

C. Channel Coast:

At Calais light artillery fire was directed against the main defense line. The enemy is still being supplied by air using freight gliders. Our artillery is returning the fire.

Operation "Bruno" - use of small battle weapons (battle swimmers) against the Kreuzschanz Lock - is intended for the night of 13 Sept. In the immediate neighborhood of the lock an enemy battery was set up on 12 Sept. Quai installations at Lilloo, starting point of the operation, are being continuously attacked by fighter-bombers with gunfire and bombs. After execution of operation "Bruno", the battle swimmers will be used for blowing-up of bridges and tunnels in the front area. For this purpose ten more battle swimmers with blasting equipment will be sent to Utrecht.

The Armed Forces High Command, National-Socialist Political Staff has issued a teletype messages for the instruction of troops. High Command, Navy, Bureau of Naval Administration has brought these instructions to the attention of all Naval organizations. Copy as per 1/Skl 34690/44 Geh. in War Diary, Provisional File "Invasion" 13 Sept.

II. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

a) Heligoland Bight:

On 13 Sept. strong enemy air reconnaissance by planes flying singly and the passing of bomber formations were reported. The operation intended for the night of 12 Sept. was carried out as planned. On 12 Sept. in all 67,199 BRT were escorted. The KMA mine operation off Terschelling is being continued. The northern channel of the Elbe from Ostebank to Brunsbuettel was closed on account of mines.

13 Sept. 1944

The following is planned for the night of 13 Sept.: continuation of the Ems - Elbe convoy from the Jade to the Elbe; execution of additional convoys between the estuaries of the Heligoland Bight; transfer of 16 boats of the 36th Minesweeper Flotilla from Terschelling to Borkum; and the transfer of five boats of the 4th PT boat Flotilla from Wesermuende to Hook of Holland.

b. Holland Coast:

A barrage barge was sunk by enemy fighter-bombers. A minesweeping boat was beached after receiving a direct hit. A steamer in the IJssel Meer was damaged.

Convoying off the Dutch coast was not carried out during the night of 12 Sept. Four naval landing craft were moved to the Scheldt using inland waterways.

c. Scheldt Area:

In the Flushing area enemy bomb attacks were carried out against Veere, Hansweert and Zijpe. Two locks were slightly damaged.

On 12 Sept. 4,700 soldiers, 1100 wounded 272 vehicles, 23 guns, 110 horses, 150 bicycles and considerable Army equipment were ferried across the Scheldt.

The situation in Antwerp is unchanged; a further restriction of the enemy Gheel bridgehead was achieved. The enemy in turn extended his Beeringen bridgehead farther to the east.

According to a report by Naval Command North, the Commanding Admiral, Netherlands wired Army Group B emphasizing the special importance of forming strong bridgeheads along the line of the Bergen op Zoom - Rozendaal - Breda - Moerdijk bridges for the eventuality that the situation requires the withdrawal of our troops from the Albert Canal. Otherwise the maintaining of communications in the Zeeland waters around Walcheren and southern Beveland with Utrecht and Rotterdam is insecure.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Thirty-five planes of the 18th Group were detected in action. One British vessel each was located at 1619 in AF 8175, at 1751 in AF 7630 to 8420. Lively and urgent radio traffic was observed between the home base and Murmansk and Archangel respectively.

13 Sept. 1944

According to a report by Naval Attache Stockholm, a Swedish paper reported from Norway on 6 Sept. that an abnormally large naval formation was observed along the Norwegian coast, amongst it modern destroyers; a German cruiser formation was off Stadtlandet.

Own Situation:

On 11 and 12 Sept. lively enemy air activity was observed in the area of Petsamol. The Battery "Petsamo" was shelled by enemy batteries on 12 Sept. at 0640.

In the area of the Admiral, North Coast the convoy traffic between Aalesund and Bodoe was opened again in the forenoon of 13 Sept.

In the area of the Admiral, West Coast 40 twin-engined planes not engaged in attacks were observed in the off-shore area between Stavenager-Kristiansand-South. During the night of 12 Sept. the area between the French north coast and Kristiansand-South was under steady enemy air reconnaissance. In the afternoon of 13 Sept. an unescorted vessel was attacked by a submarine in a shipping lane northwest of Egersund; three torpedoes were fired without success. No damage. A submarine chase is on.

In the Lister area another KMA mine barrage was laid on 12 Sept.

During the night of 12 Sept. the enemy mined the Oslo harbor with ELM mines; three mines were found ashore; shipping was stopped.

Nineteen ships were convoyed northward and seventeen southward.

Naval Command Norway informs Naval Staff about a communique it has sent to Bureau of Naval Armament, Engine Maintenance Branch which says that in view of the war situation vessels used for defensive purposes could only in exceptional cases be sent home for general overhauling until further notice.

III. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

1. Enemy Situation:

On 12 Sept. radio reconnaissance confirmed the following in the Gulf of Finland: Fleet Staff, Staff of Naval Shore Commander, a minesweeper division and 62 war vessels respectively command posts.

13 Sept. 1944

In the forenoon of 12 Sept. reconnaissance observed 14 vessels in AO 3742 and 18 in AO 3741.

2. Own Situation:

Admiral Skagerrak:

The Naval Attache Stockholm relays information received upon official request from the Swedish Navy concerning the sinking of the catapult ship WESTFALEN. The Swedish Navy is of the opinion that this ship sank three miles southwest of Stora-Poelsan after striking two mines. A completely reliable observation was not possible due to the southwest gale. A Swedish destroyer was within the Swedish mine barrage and observed the sinking vessel. The ship evidently drifted into Swedish territorial waters and ran into the Swedish barrage.

A Goeteborg newspaper reported on 11 Sept. that the WESTFALEN was sunk by two torpedoes fired by a British submarine. The report is based on declarations supposedly made by survivors and on reports from a Norwegian source that British submarines had been seen in the Skagerrak at that time. The Swedish Navy holds this statement to be unreliable. The survivors will probably arrive in Sassnitz in the afternoon of 13 Sept.

Twenty-five boats were on minesweeping mission. On 12 Sept. eleven mines were cleared in the Kattegat, Sameoe Belt and Large Belt.

Escort was provided for the cruisers EMDEN and HELA, for the minelayer KAISER and four transporters.

The cruiser EMDEN anchored in the Oslo Fjord (Mulvikn Bay) on 13 Sept.

Western and Central Baltic:

During the night of 12 Sept. and in the forenoon of 13 Sept. continuous incursions by enemy planes flying singly were reported from the Memel, Libau and Windau area.

In the morning and afternoon of 13 Sept. enemy planes flying singly reconnoitered Schleswig-Holstein to south of Kiel and Luebeck.

In the afternoon a small enemy formation flew by way of Rendsburg, Luebeck, Ruegen toward Stattin; another small formation advanced into the area north of Rendsburg-Schleswig. So far no raids have been reported.

13 Sept. 1944

Seventy-nine boats were on minesweeping duty on 12 Sept. and on 13 Sept. 54 boats and one special minesweeper.

On 12 Sept. the following mines were cleared: one each off the Irben Straits, off Pillau, south and northwest of Hela and northeast of Kolberg, two in the Mecklenburg and three in the Pommeranian Bay, seven north of Darsserort and 13 in the Kiel Bay.

On 13 Sept. the following mines were swept; one mine each in the Kiel Bay, Mecklenburg Bay and in the Irben Straits, two in the Pommeranian Bay and two north of Darsserort, three in the Danzig Bay.

On 13 Sept. noon the armed fishing vessel KFK "330" with a Mining and Barrage Experiment Command aboard sank near the approach buoy Dievenow after striking a mine; casualties were suffered.

In the afternoon of 12 Sept. the patrol vessel VS "319" sank off Neufahrwasser after an explosion, probably from spontaneous combustion of fuel oil and an ammunition fire.

Convoys were carried out as planned.

Southbound convoys from Oulu and Kemi were carried out according to plan. According to a report by Admiral, Eastern Baltic, evacuation of Oulu will be completed by evening of 14 Sept. Loading in Kemi is being continued.

The transports from and to the Gulf of Finland were carried out without incident. On 12 Sept. the Northern Army Group was supplied at Riga with 2,394 tons.

Admiral, Eastern Baltic received an order given by Naval Command Baltic in agreement with Naval Staff to continue the hauling in of nets and buoys at position "Rotbuche" even after 14 Sept., as long as no difficulties arise from other quarters.

According to a report by the Naval Liaison Officer at the 20th Mountain Army Command Finnish ships have orders to leave the ports by 1200 of 14 Sept. with the exception of Kemi. For the German ports the time is set for 1600 of the same day. Three ships which did not receive full cargo at Oulu continue loading in Kemi. Three naval landing craft are available for loading which will then sail to Reval with the last returning steamer.

Otherwise nothing to report.

13 Sept. 1944

IV. Submarine Warfare.

No special reports are at hand from the Atlantic and Indian Ocean. In Northern Waters the submarine U "992" occupies the operational area in AB 93. The submarine U "315" equipped with "Schnorchel" will leave Hammerfest on 14 Sept. for an operations against the battleship reported in the Kila Bay. Another air reconnaissance is essential and requested.

In the Gulf of Finland three submarines will be put into action for operation "Birke" in the Gulf of Bothnia.

In the Mediterranean the submarine U "565" arrived in Salamis.

V. Aerial Warfare.

1. West Area:

During the day lively enemy fighter-bomber and reconnaissance activity took place over the Dutch area. Attacks have not been reported.

Planes on their way to the Reich territory attacked road objectives in Holland with gunfire. During the night of 13 Sept. about 30 enemy planes were cruising over the Scheldt estuary and over the St. Nicolas - Mecheln area. No raids were reported.

One hundred and five of our planes were used for defense against fighter-bomber attacks and for the protection of the civilian defense workers of the West Wall in the Aachen area. No planes were lost. During the night of 13 Sept. our planes carried out attacks with good results in the Neertelt area in the immediate proximity of the bridge of Beeringen. The bridge itself was attacked by three "Mistel" and four Ju 88 planes without results being observed.

Five planes supplied Brest, Loran and Royan.

2. Reich Territory:

During the day strong bomber formations with fighter escort carried out numerous raids. Besides raids on airfields and transport objectives, places in the Rhenish-Westphalian industrial area were attacked. Likewise Osnabruck, the area of Halle-Eisenach Stuttgart, Ulm,

13 Sept. 1944

Darmstadt. Ludwigshafen, Roeblingen, Mainz and Weissenborn were raided. Formations entering from the south, raided industrial works in Moravska-Ostrava and Upper Silesia. Details about these raids are contained in the Situation of the Day.

During the night of 14 Sept. 40 to 50 Mosquitoes raided Berlin.

About 180 planes approached from the east for a raid on the Budapest area.

3. Mediterranean Theater:

In the Italian front area about 1,000 planes were observed in the Rimini area. About 150 planes, coming from Russia and carrying out attacks in Hungary, flew on to southern Italy.

4. East Area:

On 12 Sept. own and 2,465 enemy missions were reported from the eastern front. Three planes were lost and twelve shot down.

VI. Warfare in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

1. Area of German Naval Command Italy:

Enemy Situation:

In the early morning hours of 13 Sept. air reconnaissance observed a number of vessels in the waters between southern France and Corsica, among them a light cruiser. The Riviera coast was watched by a cruiser and a destroyer as well as by a PT boat during the day.

Own Situation:

During the night of 12 Sept. the minelayer NYMPHE and two naval landing craft carried out the mining operation "Hummel" southeast of Spezia.

Early on 12 Sept. and during the night of 12 Sept. our patrol boats off Spezia and the radar station Bordighera were attacked by fighterbombers without much success. During the night of 12 Sept. a naval landing craft sailing from Genoa for San Remo was attacked by PT boats off Savona. Two

13 Sept. 1944

naval landing craft sank after being hit by torpedoes
Casualties were suffered.

2. Area Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic Sea:

The Air Force report about sighting 40 vessels in the evening of 12 Sept. in the area east of Ancona was not confirmed.

At 0430 on 13 Sept. three vessels, probably a PT boat group, were sighted twelve miles east of Po di Goro.

In the afternoon of 12 Sept. the city and battery of Rimini which have repeatedly been shelled from land, were raided by fighter-bombers and bombers. On the evening Ravenna was attacked by enemy bombers with little success.

In the forenoon of 13 Sept. enemy bomb and gunfire raids against Castle Uljan and Petrocane were reported.

On 11 Sept. at 0400 the enemy landed on the eastern part of the island Brac. According to a report by Port Commander Zara, the north and west coast of Brac appear to be in the hands of the enemy. At noon the enemy landed on the north-western part of the island. Countermeasures were started during the night of 12 Sept. The 7th PT Boat Flotilla has protected troop transfers. The Battery "Split" shelled the enemy in the Supetar area.

In the afternoon of 11 Sept. the Croatian Port Commander at Sibenik with some of his men deserted after demolishing our radio transmitter station.

Operations by the 3rd PT Boat Flotilla from Dubrovnik and by the 21st PT Boat Flotilla from Corfu planned for the night of 11 Sept. had to be called off due to weather conditions. The 24th PT Boat Flotilla had to postpone the laying of deceptive location buoys off the west coast of Istria for the same reasons. The 7th PT Boat Flotilla arrived in Split early on 12 Sept. with three boats and prisoners.

b. Aegean Sea:

From a "Leander" report of 11 Sept. it was learned that Army Group E intends to by-pass Lerissa. In view of possible developments at Salonika resulting from an enemy advance into the Thracian area, Admiral, Adriatic Sea has

13 Sept. 1944

asked whether the transfer of valuable equipment to this port for reinforcement of the naval base is still justifiable. Admiral, Aegean Sea is making ruthless use of all forces in order to carry out the evacuation of heavy equipment from the islands and to shorten the repair time of sea transport vessels. Matters are particularly complicated by the lack of shipping with heavy gear and of naval ferry barges. An improvement is to be expected only by using ports not so far distant as Salonika, thus permitting the fast Crete ships to make more runs. The civilian stoker personnel has to a very large extent been replaced by naval personnel.

The execution of the mining tasks off the Thracian ports was delayed for 24 hours by enemy mining of the Bourtzi Narrows.

The weather does not show any signs of improvement.

Two enemy submarines which undertook attacks were again sighted in the area between Cassandra Huk and Trikeri. A submarine chase in this important area is going on. Transports and convoys were carried out without incident.

A convoy sailing from Tira for Herakleia was engaged in a gun duel with an enemy submarine on 12 Sept. at 2335; the convoy returned to Santorin. At 0018 another convoy on the same route was also fired at by submarine guns; particulars have not yet been received.

3. Black Sea:

Danube Situation:

No dropping of mines was reported. Eleven mines were cleared; one towing barge sank, two towing barges were damaged.

The Combat Group "Prahovo" is to defend the Danube bank. The Combat Group "Rehe" reported in the afternoon of 12 Sept. an attack by strong Russian forces from the direction of Turnu Severin supported by partisans.

On 13 Sept. Group "Stelter" reported repeated Russian surprise fire near Milutinovac; there remains ammunition for one gun only. Both four-barreled machine guns on Gun Carriers "915" are out of commission.

Supply of the strong point "Prahovo" is possible only by dropping containers since landing on the emergency airfield is no longer possible due to shelling by artillery and anti-tank guns.

13 Sept. 1944

Likewise Group "Rehe" can no longer be supplied since the Prahovo-Palanka road is under enemy fire.

At 1825 the spearhead of the regiment "Brandenburg" arrived in Prahovo.

VII. Situation Far East.

Nothing to report.

14 Sept. 1944

Items of Political Importance.

The Armistice Treaty signed by the Rumanian Government in Moscow on 13 Sept. provides that Rumania must join the Allies in their war against Germany and Hungary. Her troops will be under Russian command. The borders of 28 June 1940 are re-established. All news, theater, film, radio, mail, telegraph and telephone services will be under the supervision of the Allied (Russian) High Command. The civil administrative offices must execute all directives issued by the allied High Command.

The Vienna Treaty becomes invalid. Transylvania is to be returned to Rumania either whole or in parts.

Thus Rumania has become a Russian vassal state.

Extremely confusing reports have been received about the internal situation of France occupied by the Allies; it is certain, however, that the internal political situation is very tense.

Conference on the Situation with the Commander in Chief, Navy at 1140.

I. Naval Staff, Operations Division, Chief, Operations Branch, states that Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff has issued directives to military commanders and civilian executives concerning dispersals in Axis and occupied countries.

II. Naval Staff, Quartermaster General reports that fuel deliveries have reached an all-time low level in September. 40,000 cubic meters had to be taken from naval stores. Fuel will last only two more months if conditions do not improve. Therefore another curtailment will have to be made in October which will also affect the fleet and submarines.

III. Naval Staff, Chief, Naval Intelligence Division: British delegates were present at the Finnish-Russian conference. In the enemy press the question is being discussed what would happen in case the Germans do not evacuate northern Finland.

The Bulgarian armistice negotiations have been turned over to the European Executive Committee.

The question of command in the Pacific is ostensibly being dealt with at the Quebec Conference.

14 Sept. 1944

General Eisenhower issued a declaration to the foreign workers in Germany in which they are told to leave the factories and seek safety in the country, there to await further orders.

Conference in a Restricted Circle.

IV. Army Situation:

1. Western Front:

In northern France fighting centers in the Maastricht-Aachen sector where the 1st American Army has opened an attack with five divisions. By using all available reserves, a penetration of our weak front line could be prevented. Our forces were pushed back to the Maastricht - Aachen railroad. South and southeast of Aachen enemy penetrations into the western fortifications were cut off or mopped up. Further to the south our defense forces had to withdraw to the West Wall.

The impression prevails that the enemy is bringing up strong reinforcements and is getting ready for the planned attack.

Yesterday, too, the enemy followed the 15 Army only hesitatingly. Further delays in ferrying traffic were caused by the enemy airforce.

Attacks on Calais and Dunkirk were repulsed. Le Havre was finally lost. Fighting is going on amidst the ruins of Brest.

In the early morning hours the Diedenhofen bridgehead was evacuated and the bridge blown up.

In the southern area of the western front fighting centered around Pont a Mousson and in the Luneville area. After the bridgehead Pont a Mousson had almost been retaken in a counterattack the enemy succeeded in advancing with about 80 tanks across the river reaching the Delme - Chateau Salins area in the evening.

South of Luneville the enemy advanced to Gerberville.

In the Charmes area the enemy pressure is continuing; Neufchateau and Langres were lost. The Saone was crossed by the Americans in several places.

North of Vesoul fighting is going on.

14 Sept. 1944

2. Italian Front:

Liguria:

The French attacked Modena.

Southern Front:

East of Florence enemy attacks by two or three divisions on both sides of the Futa Pass were repulsed. Concentrations of enemy forces here point to a continuation of the major battle.

On the left flank of the 10th Army, the 8th British Army in a second major attack is keeping up its intention to force the breakthrough into the Po Valley. Violent fighting is raging supported by 300 to 400 tanks; uninterrupted gunfire is directed at the focal point of the attack; successive air raids on the main defense line and gun positions. The situation is critical.

3. Balkan Peninsula:

The withdrawal movements in Greece are being carried out as planned. Fighting with the Bulgarians in the Prilep-Strip - Kriva - Palacana area continues. Our forces had to retreat several kilometers to the west.

Dispersal movements on the islands of Brac, Corcula and Peljesac were started.

4. Eastern Front:

Army Group Southern Ukraine:

South of Cluj enemy attacks were repulsed. Withdrawal movements in the Carpathian Mountains are still going on, according to plan. They are made more difficult by inclement weather.

Army Group Northern Ukraine:

The battle north of the Beskid Mountains is being continued with undiminishing strength. South of Sanok a break through was prevented and an intercepting front was improvised. Weak enemy forces advanced 20 km to the south and crossed the Slovakian border.

14 Sept. 1944

CONFIDENTIAL

Central Army Group:

In the Vistula bridgehead the enemy continued his attacks with far superior forces. Heavy street fighting with high casualties developed in and east of Praga.

In order to prevent the crushing of our troops and the breakthrough of the enemy to the bridges along the northern Vistula, the evacuation of Praga had to be ordered.

In the Marez bridgeheads the enemy remained inactive. The enemy was quickly following up our withdrawal movements west of Lomja to the narrow Novogorod bridgehead. He immediately began attacking with about five divisions. Heavy fighting continues; the situation is serious.

Northern Army Group:

Bitter local fighting in the Bauske area.

Our offensive operation penetrated into enemy territory to a depth of 10 km. After completion of the task the troops were again withdrawn to the main defense line. It is clear that the Russians leave only small forces on quiet places of the front in knowledge of our weakness; they concentrate their troops at decisive points.

V. Naval Staff, Operations Division, Chief, Operations Branch:

a. It intended to use the EMDEN as mine carrier for operations in the Skagerrak.

b. Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff Navy instructed Naval Staff about a directive concerning the establishment of a defense line along the Rhine. A check is being made at the present time to establish in what manner the Navy can support the defense of the river.

c. Weather operations "Goldschmied" will be substituted for weather operation "Edelweiss". The operation will receive the designation "Edelweiss 2". Naval Command Norway requests the assignment of a submarine for convoying. Commander in Chief, Navy agrees.

VI. Naval Staff, Quartermaster General:

The question evacuating troops from northern Finland via the Baltic Sea is at present being checked with the Reich Commissioner for Maritime Shipping. Commander in Chief, Navy remarks that this question has been under consideration

CONFIDENTIAL

14 Sept. 1944

by the Fuehrer for some time. Decision must be made now. Unless a decision is made large transport ships will not be sent to the area of northern Finland.

VII. The question of informing the front troops is again being discussed. Commander in Chief, Navy feels that the objective bulletins issued regularly by the Naval Staff, Naval Intelligence Division and by the Operations Division are not sufficient and orders the issuance of a short report on the situation by the Navy. A copy of the first edition dated 14 Sept. under the heading "Brief Report on the Situation by the Commander in Chief, Navy" is found in War Diary, Part B, Vol. V.

Special Items.

I. Eastern Baltic.

A. Operation "Tanne Ost":

Naval Staff at the request of the Commander in Chief, Navy informs ARMED Forces High Command, Operations Staff Navy, Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters, Army General Staff and High Command, Air, Operations Staff of the following directive by Admiral, Eastern Baltic in regard to operation "Tanne Ost":

1. a. Captain Mecke and Lt. Commander Kiefer (Commander of the 3rd Minesweeper Flotilla) will go ashore (depending on weather conditions in a PT boat a quarter of an hour ahead of time) and will announce to the Commandant of the Island the order of the Fuehrer about the occupation. The mentality of the Island Commandant, so well known, must be considered. He must be permitted to report to his superior. Communication lines must be supervised, under given circumstances cut. Upon his refusal to permit the occupation of the Island it must be pointed out to him that the order of the Fuehrer will be carried out and that the necessary forces are ready for action.

b. Should the Naval Liaison Officer be interned two hours after the time set for evacuation on account of the announced departure, nothing will change in regard to the order. The future island Commandant and the Commander of the 3rd Minesweeper Flotilla will try to communicate with the Finnish Island Commandant; landing to take place at the same time.

14 Sept. 1944

CONFIDENTIAL

c. In any case, the Commandant of the Island will be informed, after parts of the forces have landed, that all arms on the island will become property of the German Navy for the time being. Finnish soldiers who wish to remain, will be permitted to fight on our side; the others can leave unhindered (no German vessels).

d. Commander of 3rd Minesweeper Flotilla must make sure that after a short conversation with the Island Commandant the landing will take place. Motor minesweepers will drop a warning buoy at the boundary of the declared area and land troops. The unloading of the minesweeping boats follows. Commander of the 3rd Minesweeper Flotilla will report "Landing as planned" (on Kothe's and landing wave length when operation comes off according to plan). This means that the Group "Kothe" is to return to Baltic Port.

e. In case of resistance, radio "Fire support", whereupon destroyers and troop boats will open fire on the southern part of the island. Minesweeping boats, motor minesweepers, artillery ferry barges and naval landing craft will force the landing in the harbor. The destroyers must be released as soon as resistance is broken.

f. A sortie by Russian IT boats must be reckoned with. Motor minesweepers and artillery heavy barges are to be put into action against them.

2. Unloading must take place quickly; the entire island must be occupied immediately for defense against a Russian landing attempt according to special directives by Island Commandant. Eight motor minesweepers and artillery ferry barges will defend the harbor to the east observing carefully the declared area boundary. Minesweeping boats will return in groups to Reval immediately after unloading where they will take on the second cargo. Naval landing craft will follow in groups escorted by motor minesweepers and artillery ferry barges. Departure upon order by the Commanders of the 7th Gun Carrier Flotilla. Two artillery ferry barges will remain at Suurkylae during the coming night and protect the unloading; the remaining four naval landing craft will remain in the harbor and start their return at dusk. The Commander of the 7th Gun Carrier Flotilla will direct the shuttle traffic between Reval - Loksa - Hogland and return. Loading in Reval will be supervised by the Commander of the 24th Training Flotilla. Each naval landing craft is valuable.

3. The 1st Air Force has assigned twelve fighters and two squadrons of bomber planes, the latter to be used in case of an enemy landing, the former to protect unloading and returning naval landing craft.

14 Sept. 1944

4. a. Two barges will take the direct route from Tyters to Hogland.

b. Three motor minesweepers coming from the Finnish Skerries will join the formation off Vaindlo.

c.- PT. boats, partly likewise from the Finnish Skerries will assemble in Kilga Bay. Action upon request order of Admiral, Eastern Baltic.

Commanding Admiral, Naval Command Baltic radiobed: "I consider the going ashore of Mecke simultaneously with Kiefer to be risky. If still possible advise change of order so that Mecke will definitely be available for the actual operation." Copy as per 1/Skl I op. 28431/44 Gkdos. in War Diary, Part C, Vol. III.

At 2125 Admiral, Eastern Baltic reports on the departure of forces for operation "Tanne Ost" as follows:

- "1. Direct route: One PT boat, 4 motor minesweepers, 8 mine-sweeping boats, 2 anti-aircraft chasers. On their way they will be joined by 3 motor minesweepers commanded by the Commander of 3rd Minesweeper Flotilla, Lieutenant Kiefer.
2. From places near Eckholm, 1 motor minesweeper, 8 artillery ferry barges and 10 naval landing craft will be assembled under the command of Commander of 7th Gun Carrier Flotilla, Lieutenant Commander Sonnemann.
3. On the destroyer route - afterwards turning off to the north - Commander of 6th Destroyer Flotilla with the destroyers Z "23", "25", "36" and torpedo boats T "23" and "28".
4. Two ferries from Tyters.
5. Five PT boats will be assembled in Kolga Bay.
6. One submarine north of Hogland and three in the Narva Bay.
7. The torpedo boats T "8" and "12" (convoy MOLTKEFERS) are in immediate readiness at the Reval roadsteads.
8. The following personnel is aboard the ships:
 - a. In regard to 1: 650 soldiers of Inf. Reg. 68, 380 men of Naval Artillery Battalion 531, 155 men of Assault Boat Commando 902.
 - b. In regard to 2: 160 men of assault Boat Command 903, 200 men of Air Force anti-aircraft artillery, and 50 men of signal and motor personnel.

14 Sept. 1944

- c. In regard to 1 and 2: In all 40 assault boats.
 - d. In regard to 4: Naval Artillery Battalion 531 and 80 engineers.
9. Material loaded: Six Air Force 8.8 cm anti-aircraft guns, 19 Air Force 2 cm anti-aircraft guns, six 60 cm searchlights, one tractor, two trucks, motorcycles, radio truck, ammunition, accessories, items of equipment, food, four 2.7 cm anti-tank guns and engineer gear.
10. The MOLTKEFELS arrived at 2000. Five naval landing craft are loading heavy infantry arms of Naval Artillery Battalion 531 and Inf. Reg. 68, anti-aircraft artillery at Utoe, medical supplies, food, and ammunition."

B. - Treatment of Finnish Ships:

Naval Staff relays to Naval Command Baltic, North and Norway the following directive by Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff:

"The Fuehrer has ordered that for the present Finnish ships are to be treated as neutrals, even after 15 Sept. until further clarification of the political situation in Finland."

The Chief, Sea Transport for the Armed Forces reports that the Belgian steamer YSER was boarded by the Finns and brought to a Swedish port when negotiations failed. More trouble is expected in regard to other steamers.

C. Upon request made by Naval Command Baltic on 7 Sept. Naval Staff transmits the following decision of Army High Command, Army General Staff: It is not possible to change Memel into a fortress. The Memel bridgehead is being fortified by the Central Army Group. Inclusion into the East Prussian border defense has already taken place.

II. Commander, PT Boats reports on the bases planned or prepared in the Heligoland Bight in cooperation with Naval Command Norway. Main bases are Emden, Wilhelmshaven, Wesermuende and Cuxhaven. Operational bases are Borkum, Heligoland, List and Esbjerg. Borkum and List are perhaps only to be used as starting points. Dockyards are available at Wilhelmshaven, Hamburg, Wesermuende, Cuxhaven and Emden. Use of Heligoland for two PT boat flotillas presupposes making use of a submarine shelter which is being requested. The preparation of the bases in the Skagerrak area is being postponed until all questions about PT boat operations are clarified by Commander, PT boats in a personal conference with Naval Staff. Naval Command Baltic requested confirmation that Esbjerg - in case it is used by Naval Command North as an operational base for a PT boat flotilla - will be supplied and fitted out by Naval Command Baltic. The matter will be attended to by Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division.

14 Sept. 1944

III. Concerning minelayers for Naval Command Norway, Naval Staff decides that the planned barrage is to be laid by the KAISER, since the LOTHRINGEN and the ELSASS will not be ready in time. Naval Command Baltic and Norway receive directives to arrange details.

IV. At the proposal of the Fleet, Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division decides that, for the present, the overhauling of ships, destroyers and torpedo boats in the home area are to be postponed. Plans, however, are already being made now for overhauling of ships and engines beginning January 1945. Therefore the overhauling of the PRINZ EUGEN and the LIEPZIG will not take place this year. The Bureau of Naval Administration has been requested to see to it that all dockyard facilities are fully used for the acceleration of current repairs including repairs on ships returning from the Holland area, as well as for important new constructions of special minesweepers, hospital ships, etc.

V. The report, respectively study of the Commanding General, Southwest requested by Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff on 7 Sept. concerning the withdrawal to the Lower Alps position was made as per 1/Skl I Ops 2900/44 Gkds. Chfs. in War Diary, Part C Vol. XIV. The report supports the attitude stated by German Naval Command Italy on 12 Sept. (see War Diary 12 Sept.).

In regard to the opinion expressed by German Naval Command Italy, Group South reports that the intention of the Commanding General, Southwest as to the withdrawal of the Adige line to the Lower Alps positions, confirms with the opinion voiced by Group South and is looked upon as a well timed measure. Group South points again to the importance of evacuating arms, ammunition and manufacturing plants in view of the fact that vessels of Admiral, Adriatic Sea are partly armed with Italian equipment.

Concerning the merger of German Naval Command Italy with Admiral, Adriatic Sea, Group South also believes that it is desirable to put the Naval Shore Commander, West Adriatic Sea under the command of Admiral, Adriatic Sea, as long as the Adige line is being defended. It is the opinion of Group South that it would be of advantage to replace the Italians and Croats in the Adriatic region by naval ground forces becoming available. Naval forces can - after abandonment of the Adige line - also be put to useful action along the remaining front of the East Adriatic Sea.

VI. In regard to the unsatisfactory state of affairs in Belgrade reported by Reich Security Central Office, Naval Liaison Officer at Army Group F. replies that abuses of the kind mentioned are unknown to the General for Special Duties,

14 Sept. 1944

Belgrade - the highest intercepting office there. Naturally certain complications were faced by all organizations of the Armed Forces at the beginning, because billeting and transport facilities were not yet operating smoothly. The fact that ship crews who had lost everything when their ships were down were badly clothed should not be cause for complaint. Likewise the intermediate intercepting camp of the Air Force Command Southeast at Pancova did not observe any occurrences of the kind named by the Reich Security Central Office. The matter is being named by the Reich Security Central Office. The matter is being checked further. The Naval Liaison Officer points out that the minesweeper, PT boat and submarine crew tried to reach Swinemünde as quickly as possible in order to be reassigned to new vessels.

V7II. Between Naval Staff, Operations Division and Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Fleet Branch the question raised in construction circles, was discussed whether a new fleet construction program should be substituted for the fleet construction program of 1943 which was aligned to the war situation of that time. In the meantime the situation has changed greatly. Construction circles expect that the new minimum program will result in a great reduction of the original demands due to the present limited area of naval warfare. A reorganization of the program is likewise necessary due to the new type of vessels built in the meantime and the experience gained in their use, due to the changed fuel situation and due to the changed set-up of the armament industry.

Naval Staff, Operations Division is of the opinion that definite calculations regarding future requirements cannot be made since the present war situation is characterized by sudden changes. It can however be said that the demands of the northern area have not changed. It is possible that in the east - in the case of an eventual elimination of the mine barrage system in the Gulf of Finland, in the area of the central and western Baltic Sea and especially in the Baltic Sea entrances - considerably higher demands for defense forces of all kinds must be made. The southern areas - Mediterranean, Aegean and Black Sea - were represented in the old fleet construction program with only a few types. They had to depend chiefly upon their own stocks and manufacture. Only at the beginning a limited number of war vessels was assigned. (Motor minesweeper and PT boat flotillas). Supply of landing vessels as well as armed fishing vessels is not covered by the above statement.

In the discussion of the different types of ships the following was ascertained:

14 Sept. 1944

1. Destroyers:

The disappearance of destroyers is an inevitable fact. The completion of the destroyers Z "45" and "51" is requested.

2. Torpedo Boats:

The torpedo boats which suffered high losses and received only four replacements in the past eight months must under no circumstances disappear. Naval Staff cannot reduce its demand for twelve torpedo boats per year.

3. Minesweeping Boats:

The number of such boats provided for in the fleet construction program of 1943 can be reduced neither now nor in the future. They represent the minimum requirements for the indispensable establishment of new formations, for submarine chasers and for the replacement of losses.

4. Multiple Purpose Boats:

Naval Staff asks to postpone decision until try-out reports have been received from the front.

5. Motor Minesweepers:

For the time being the program calling for the construction of from eight to nine boats a month is to be adhered to in order to achieve the planned number of flotillas. If events take their normal course, requirements could be lowered within six months.

6. Armed Fishing Vessels:

The demand for 400 vessels a year is to be maintained. It is assumed that the armed fishing vessels will gradually replace the trawlers of the patrol flotillas.

7. Naval Landing Craft:

Here a thorough investigation is in place. A specific demand cannot be made at present.

8. Mine Exploding Vessels:

A limitation of the present demand is not possible. In view of the development of D-mines, a new type of mine exploding vessel will probably have to be designed, the effect of which on the construction program cannot yet be judged.

9. PT Boats:

14 Sept. 1944

In view of the fact that construction facilities are limited to 17 boats a month, a lowering of the present demand for 25 boats a month can be taken into consideration after the Holland area is lost. A discussion with the Commander, PT Boats about further use of PT boats must precede any decision.

Situation 14 Sept.

I. Situation West Area:

1. Enemy Situation:

Thirteen planes of the 19th Group were detected on missions. A British vessel was located in AM 5560 at 2644.

2. Own Situation:

A Western French Fortresses:

Brest: According to a report from the Naval Shore Commander, the naval hospital burned out completely after artillery shelling. The shelters and cellars were saved by the energetic action of the personnel.

In the evening of 13 Sept. it was possible after heavy fighting to seal off the penetration in the western part of the fortress and to set up a new defense line. High casualties were suffered. During the night of 13 Sept. continuous enemy artillery and mortar fire lay on the entire fortress area and on the Crozon peninsula. The situation at point Audierne remains the same.

According to the daily report of 14 Sept. the enemy is fighting his way deep into the main defense area of the western part of the fortress with the help of superior infantry and armored forces supported by strong air force formations against doggedly and tenaciously fighting pockets of resistance, strong points and last defensive fronts. The strong point Portzic and the submarine harbor are engaged in a hard defensive struggle. In the eastern part of the fortress bitter street fighting is taking place with high losses on both sides. Two guns of our artillery participated in the defensive battle firing the last remaining shells.

The fortress Commander has expressed deep appreciation to the Naval Shore Commander, Rear Admiral Kaehler, for an exemplary cooperation and capable command of his naval

14 Sept. 1944

forces. The Naval Shore Commander in turn has acknowledged the excellent performances on the part of the Port Commander (Capt. Kaehlert) and of Vice Admiral Schirmer.

Lorient: The defense line of the entire fortress area is being heavily shelled by enemy artillery. Fire control gear 3/808 was put out of action. Our batteries shelled enemy movements and heavy arms with good results. Lively reconnaissance on our part.

Due to the development of the situation, Rear Admiral Matthiae was named Deputy Naval Shore Commander for the Lorient area up to the areal limits of Naval Shore Commander Loire. The anti-aircraft artillery brigade, the Port Commander and coastal artillery are under the immediate command of the Fortress Commander, the Naval Shore Commander Bretagen has given the Commander of Naval Artillery Battalion 681, Lt. Commander Hillenbrandt, commander of a fortress sector, in recognition for his excellent performance the rank and authority of a regimental commander.

La Rochelle: The intention to deliver supplies by air, contemplated for the night of 15 Sept. had to be postponed due to weather conditions. The 4th defense division is being disbanded. The last two auxiliary minesweepers are now operated by Naval Regiment John.

Gironde Fortresses: Desertion of the racial Germans, Group 3, whose number in the two fortresses is 900, is still going on. The fighting strength is thereby weakened to an ever increasing extent. Supply with bazookas and newspapers took place as planned.

B. Channel Waters:

The Naval Shore Commander Pas de Calais reports that the amount of ammunition on hand in the fortress of his area - especially for the army batteries in the Dunkirk area - is absolutely insufficient; he requests that supplies are brought in either by PT boats, ferry barges or by air.

It is intended to supply Calais and Boulogne during the night of 14 Sept. with the aid of two He 111 planes, and Dunkirk with the aid of four He 111 planes. Feasibility of sea transport is being checked.

On 14 Sept. the Naval forces were distributed as follows: in Boulogne 3,508 men, 207 of them belonging to Commanding Admiral, Defenses West; in Calais 2,921 men, 38 of them belonging to Commanding Admiral, Defenses West; in Dunkirk 2,386 men, 106 of them belonging to Commanding Admiral, Defenses West. On the morning, harbor, city and strong

14 Sept. 1944

points of Boulogne were shelled by enemy guns. Furthermore lively enemy fighter-bomber activity, directed against artillery positions and strong points, was reported.

The special weapons operation "Bruno" started with five battle swimmers from Lilloo during the night of 13 Sept. The operation had to be stopped since the swimmers could not make any progress against the strong undertow in spite of the flood tide. All battle swimmers returned to Lilloo. For the night of 14 Sept. three special torpedo mines are to be towed by two Linsen (small battle weapons) to the lock entrance and from there to the target by six battle swimmers. Furthermore an operation by battle swimmers against bridges in the area of Vught, south of Hertogenbusch is contemplated for the night of 14 Sept.

II. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

Heligoland Bight:

In the afternoon of 14 Sept. a small enemy bomber formation was shelled by naval anti-aircraft guns at Sylt and Brunsbuettel. One plane was downed near Hemmingstedt.

Dutch Coast:

During the night of 14 Sept. the 36th Minesweeper Flotilla was unsuccessfully attacked by enemy bombers northwest of Terschelling. One of our convoys between Hook of Holland and Ymuiden was attacked; three bombs missed their targets. A steamer ran aground in the Molengat and is temporarily blocking the channel.

At 2325 an eastbound convoy off Texel was attacked by enemy PT boats. The attack was repeated without success off Terschelling after midnight. At the same time the convoy was attacked by bombers. One of the attacking PT boats was sunk.

During the night of 13 Sept. 29240 BRT were convoyed.

Scheldt:

By 1800 of 13 Sept. 4,828 soldiers, 340 vehicles, 50 guns, two tanks, 513 horses and 533 bicycles had been ferried across. Full use of the shipping space could not be

14 Sept. 1944

made.

In the afternoon of 13 Sept. the 1st Gun Carrier Flotilla repulsed enemy bomber and fighter-bomber raids while departing from Veere.

A report about operations by special weapons against Antwerp has already been made.

Naval Command North reported that only four naval landing craft were withdrawn from the KMA mine operation. The mine operation in the Heligoland Bight is being continued by one naval landing craft and the FRISIA 10.

Concerning the land situation Naval Command North reports that artillery and mortar fire was directed against Lilloo, in the area north of Antwerp. Between Antwerp and Maastricht our forces were withdrawn to a new line. Gheel was abandoned. Strong defense forces were put into action against the enemy bridgehead north of Neerpelt.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Thirty two planes of the 18th Group were detected on missions. Shortly after midnight a British vessel was located by Svanvik in 2990.

Own Situation:

On 12 and 13 Sept. moderate enemy air activity in the area of Admiral, Polar Coast. The Norwegian cutter ALBATROS sank off Kiberg after being hit by a bomb. In the afternoon of 13 Sept. the patrol vessel V "6505" was unsuccessfully attacked by a Boston with torpedoes. On 14 Sept. at 0028 the minesweeper M "252" repulsed an attack made by six or eight enemy PT boats east of Sylte Fjord. At 0845 a Spitfire attacked V "6104" with gunfire in the Sylte Fjord.

Beginning at noon on 13 Sept. till the morning of 14 Sept. numerous incursions made by planes flying singly and concentrating on the Sogne Fjord, were reported from the west coast area. At 1659 the submarine chaser "1104" reported a gunfire attack on a Swedish convoy southeast of Lister. The 35 enemy planes turned to the south after recognizing the nationality of the convoy. No losses occurred.

Northwest of Egersund the Norwegian steamer FORCE (499 BRT) was stopped by an enemy submarine and ostensibly attacked with torpedoes and gunfire. At 1520 the submarine was shelled by coastal batteries and forced to turn off and submerge.

14 Sept. 1944

Eleven ships northbound and thirty ships southbound were convoyed.

According to a report by Naval Command Norway, the 8,500 ton dry dock at Bergen broke apart after a detonation and sank on 11 Sept. at 1355. A number of Norwegian workers lost their lives. Security measures in the shipyards have been increased.

III. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

1. Enemy Situation:

On 13 Sept. radio interception detected in the Gulf of Finland the following: Fleet Staff, Commander, Coastal Defense, six mine clearance divisions and eighty two war vessels or command posts. On 14 Sept. at 0725 twenty vessels were sighted in the Narva Bay.

2. Own Situation:

Skagerrak:

Twenty vessels were on minesweeping duty. The KMA mine formation has carried out the mining operation.

In the shipyard of Copenhagen, the steamer IRENE OLDENDORF (1,952 BRT) of the Hansa construction program sank after an explosion; sabotage is suspected.

The patrol vessel VP "1608" sank off Kristiansand-South. Particulars have not yet been received. Convoys were carried out without incident.

According to a report by Naval Liaison Officer at the 5th Air Force, proper air escort and convoy protection for the execution of the mining operations in the Skagerrak cannot be furnished by the 5th Air Force due to lack of suitable planes and fuel.

Western and Central Baltic Sea:

Seventy boats and two special minesweepers were on mine clearance duty. In all nine mines were cleared from the Kiel Bay to the Danzig Bay.

14 Sept. 1944

On 13 Sept. at 0930 the submarine U "424" repulsed the attack of two enemy planes in the Danzig Bay. In the afternoon of 14 Sept. about twenty planes were over the Memel waters.

The 2nd Task Force with the PRINZ EUGEN and the 2nd Torpedoboat Flotilla departed from Gdynia on 13 Sept. at 1900 as planned. Convoys were carried out without special occurrences.

Admiral, Eastern Baltic:

On 13 Sept. the minesweeper M "3117" was unsuccessfully attacked by low flying planes while on barrage patrol in the Gulf of Finland. On 14 Sept. at 0600 the convoy auxiliary war vessel RO "22" was unsuccessfully attacked by aerial torpedoes 20 miles northwest of Baltic Port. In the same position the escort of steamer MOLTKEFELS was unsuccessfully attacked by aerial torpedoes.

Narva patrol submarine chase and barrage patrol were carried out as planned. Four submarines are at the assigned positions. The barrage gap at Soedra Kvarken will be occupied by one submarine each at the north and south exit.

The minelaying formation "Schnellschluss" for the northern part of the "Seeigel" system transferred to Mussalo with five naval landing craft and two minesweepers escorted by PT boats.

The torpedo boats T "23" and "28" were put under the command of the Commander of the 6th Destroyer Flotilla. The destroyer Z "28" is in Reval and Z "25" and "36" are in Baltic Port.

The 3rd Torpedo Boat Flotilla with four boats has returned to Libau after having convoyed the barges between Abo and Windau. A fifth boat is following with a capture Estonian motor sailing vessel. Convoys are being carried out as planned. On 13 Sept. the Northern Army Group was supplied with 3,203 tons at Riga and with 163 tons at Reval; likewise 18 motor vehicles and guns were delivered.

According to Naval Command Baltic, the Quartermaster General of the Northern Army Group is satisfied with the supplies delivered by sea. The present strength of the Northern Army Group is 610,276 men, the entire number of personnel to be supplied is 661,973 men.

According to a report by Naval Attache Stockholm, the Swedish Government will declare the waters of the Ore Sund a prohibited area. The measures will go into effect at the end of the Finnish-Russian armistice, at midnight of 14 Sept.

14 Sept. 1944

The purpose is to facilitate the control of ships sailing through Swedish territorial waters into the Gulf of Bothnia. The ships plying between Germany and Swedish ports are not affected thereby, since they have always received permits from the proper authorities. German ships sailing for Finnish ports in the Gulf of Bothnia will not receive permits.

IV. -Submarine Warfare.

The next four submarines returning to Norway from the Atlantic will receive orders to sail for Bergen.

The submarine U "673" departed from St. Nazaire sailing for Norway.

Based on radio interception messages concerning destroyer and patrol vessel movements in the Archangel area and from increasing radio traffic, the Commander, Submarines assumes the start of a QP convoy in the Polar Sea. Patrol of the Bear Narrows will be increased to six boats, which will occupy positions in the attack area AB 3575 to AC 4773. Three submarines departed from Narvik or Hammerfest respectively.

The submarine U "992" with weather ships and weather detachment for operation "Edelweiss 2" is again on the way.

In the Gulf of Bothnia the submarine U "1165" is operating in the area between Kemi and Oulu, the submarine U "290" and U "479" north and south of Soedra Kvarken.

Concerning operations in the Adriatic Sea, Naval Staff, Submarine Division notifies Operations Division of a directive to Group South, according to which only two of three submarines are at present ready for action. One of them is in the operational area north of Crete. Stationing of a submarine off Lissa does not appear to be very promising and would be without noticeable influence on the whole situation in the Balkans. The boats have no Zaunkoenig torpedoes at their disposal. Therefore an exchange of torpedoes at Pola would be necessary. Concerning the Crete area, Naval Staff, Submarine Division states that operations north of the island have been unsuccessful so far and no successes are expected there in the future. The boats must be assigned to areas where the chances for success are much greater, e.g. off Alexandria or in the Haifa area.

No special reports from the Indian Ocean.

14 Sept. 1944

V. Aerial Warfare.

1. West Area:

During the day numerous demolition bombs were dropped on Den Haag. About 150 enemy planes were on missions in the area of Terschelling, Maastricht, Antwerp and Scheldt estuary; they carried out gunfire raids in the Breda area.

During the night of 14 Sept. eight He 111 planes supplied Dunkirk, Calais and Boulogne.

2. Reich Territory:

During the day only small enemy formations were active over Reich territory. Ships on the Rhine and trains were raided in the St. Goar area. Two small formations entered the Schleswig and Heide area by way of the Heligoland Bight. Isolated bombs were dropped on Hemmingstedt causing slight damage.

In the night of 14 Sept. one plane dropped five demolition bombs on Vienna. About 150 enemy planes coming from Russia attacked Budapest and caused some damage. Ten to fifteen Russian planes penetrated by way of Cracow into the Katowich-Czestochowa area without undertaking any attack.

3. Mediterranean Theater:

Missions over the southeastern Po Valley and the Italian front area were flown by about 1,300 enemy planes. Raids were concentrated on the Virencuola and Rimini area. In addition, bridges in the area of Trient - Bolsena as well as artillery and infantry positions near the Futa Pass were attacked. Other enemy missions were of the usual kind.

4. Eastern Area:

On 13 Sept. 430 own and 2,580 enemy missions were reported from the eastern front. We lost one plane and shot down nine.

14 Sept. 1944

VI. Warfare in the Mediterranean and the Black Sea.

1. Area of German Naval Command, Italy:

Enemy Situation:

On 12 Sept. at 0820 a convoy consisting of ten freighters, one tanker and two corvets passed the Straits of Gibraltar from the Atlantic sailing eastwards.

Off the Riviera the usual patrol activity by light enemy naval forces was observed. In the afternoon of 13 Sept. the coast at Cape Mortola and in the evening of 14 Sept. Imperia was shelled by a cruiser and two destroyers.

On the morning air reconnaissance detected three LCT's north-northwest of Cape Corso on south-southeasterly course.

During the night of 13 Sept. various boat groups were again detected off the coast in the Gulf of Genoa. One group was shelled by a naval battery using radar location four miles southeast of Nervi and was compelled to turn off.

Own Situation:

During the night of 13 Sept. the mining operation "Hornisse" southeast of Spezia was carried out by two naval landing craft as planned. Both naval landing craft and one submarine chaser were on their return voyage attacked by two PT boats off Sestri Levante. The submarine chaser "2216" was sunk by a torpedo. A PT boat attack on a convoy between Genoa and Spezia was unsuccessful.

Four motor minesweepers on a reconnaissance sweep south of Genoa were unsuccessfully attacked by enemy fighter-bombers.

Off Carrara a minelaying naval landing craft laid forty coastal mines "A".

Command of Small Battle Units reports fighter-bomber raids on the anchorages of the Small Battle Weapon Flotilla 364 in the Verona area. The craft remained undamaged. One truck was destroyed.

Twenty craft of the Small Battle Weapons Flotilla 411 will be transferred to San Remo for action along the southern French coast. Thirty craft of the Small Battle Weapons Flotilla 364 will transfer to the Padua area for action in the northern Adriatic Sea.

14 Sept. 1944

At 2015 five battle swimmers departed from Venice for an operation against the harbor Ancona.

At 2100 the 1st Assault Boat Flotilla consisting of five two-men and ten one-man assault boats sailed from San Remo to attack a destroyer group in square CJ 1435.

2. Area of Naval Group South:

a. Adriatic sea: In the evening of 13 Sept. five vessels were between Rimini and Ancona and two more east of Po di Coro, according to air reconnaissance. Early on 14 Sept. one medium and three small vessels were detected in the harbor of Ancona.

In the afternoon of 13 Sept. the harbor of Trpan on the northern coast of Peljesac was shelled by three (presumably) destroyers and Sucuraj on Hvar by a cruiser in the evening of 14 Sept.

The landing craft I "102" was damaged by a bomb hit in Corcula and capsized near Peljesac.

The evacuation of Supetar on Brac was carried out early on 13 Sept. The evacuation of Corcula is being continued according to plan. The transports are being escorted by boats of the 7th PT Boat Flotilla.

Two boats of the 3rd PT Boat Flotilla arrived in Dubrovnik early on 14 Sept. after escorting a convoy of naval artillery barges. In the evening of 14 Sept. three boats of the 24th PT Boat Flotilla sailed from Grado for operation "Holzschuh 1". The boats are to return to Pola.

At 2000 the minelayer KIEBITZ accompanied by the torpedo boats TA "20" and "40" sailed from Trieste for the mining operation "Waschbaer".

The Siebel ferry in the Tagliamento estuary after having caught fire struck a coastal mine "A".

On the afternoon the building of the "Adria Zeitung" in Trieste was destroyed by bombs. Another bombing attempt was carried out against the militia billets at the railroad station of Camp Marco.

b. Aegean Sea: The coastal defense vessel GK "06" and the steamer TONI (638 BRT) are overdue since 0600 on 13 Sept. A boat with seven survivors was sighted by a plane 35 miles north of Herakleiz. The vessel has probably been sunk by a submarine.

14 Sept. 1944

At 0900 on 13 Sept. the netlayer PIRAEUS was unsuccessfully attacked with four torpedoes fired by an enemy submarine. In the evening of 13 Sept. one objective, probably a submarine, was located 30 miles south of Milos respectively 30 miles northeast of Retymnon.

In the course of an air attack the war transport PELIKAN received slight damage. In an air raid on the harbor of Argostoli in the afternoon of 12 Sept. the Siebel ferry "294" succeeded in bringing down two planes.

On 12 Sept. a motor sailing vessel loaded with evacuation goods from Mytilene ran aground off Lemnos. The Greek captain fled. The anti-aircraft crew of the ship prevented the attempt of reaching Turkish soil.

During the night of 14 Sept. numerous bombs were dropped on airfields in the Athens area. Damage is very slight.

A boat of the Coastal Defense Flotilla, Western Greece sank without casualties while removing a mine. East of Herakleia, a patrol boat of the Coastal Defense Flotilla, Peloponnesos sank.

Convoy service had to be interrupted due to weather conditions.

Under the circumstances the new moon period can hardly be utilized for sea transports.

Admiral, Aegean Sea reported to Group South that available submarines will be provisioned for twelve weeks. The submarines will be once more replenished shortly before the abandonment of the submarine base at Salamis. For the time being the submarine base at Salonika is ready for replenishing and dockyard assistance. Admiral feels that the prospects of success in the Aegean Sea are good and far reaching. In the Adriatic Sea, operations are limited due to shallow waters. In Salonika construction project "Ajax" for type XXIII boats was stopped. Other preparations at this base are being continued. The submarine base and shipyard at Salamis will remain in perfect condition until the arrival of the last submarine.

According to another monitored radiogram by Admiral, Aegean Sea to Group South, the order to evacuate Kephallonia by the morning of 11 Sept. could not be executed in time; according to a report by the Port Commander at Argostoli the evacuation was delayed as the result of the indisiplined behavior of Army units. It is the opinion of Army Group E, with whom the matter was taken up, that these soldiers probably were men unworthy of bearing arms.

14 Sept. 1944

According to a "Leander" report of 14 Sept. Patras is being held due to premature evacuation of Missologhi by the Army. The artillery defense units at Rhion and Anthirhion are being used for the protection of the Corinthia position. The 19th Anti-Aircraft Artillery Division is being transferred to Salonika. Anti-aircraft defense will chiefly be provided for the Piraeus harbor, the Tatoi airfield, for railroad installations and for the harbor of Salonika.

The port commands at Navarino, Kalamata and Gythion on the Peloponnesos have been discontinued. The Nauplia defense forces will be evacuated after the demolition and mining of the harbor. Admiral, Aegean Sea has been charged with the sea patrols. The guns of Battery 7/609 on the western side of the Nauplia Bay were blown up.

The evacuation of Kephallonia in western Greece by Battery 3 and 8/617 has not yet been carried out. The Naval Shore Commander has no clear picture of the situation due to disrupted communication lines. Batteries in the area of Rhion will be manned by the personnel of the Naval Artillery Battalion 617. After execution of current transports, demolition of the harbor of Igoumitza is planned. Forces of the Naval Artillery Battalion 617 are used for carrying out the blocking of the Gulf of Corinthia. In Attica, Army Group E has ordered the evacuation of Paros.

The alternate position "Adele" of Admiral, Aegean Sea in the "Macedonian" area is unsuited on account of partisan activities there. Evacuation of personnel and equipment to Salonika has been ordered.

c. Black Sea

Danube Situation:

Group "Iron Gate" has postponed a renewed advance towards Milanovac - part of the operation "Donauelfe" - until the Army situation is clarified. Nova-Moldova is again in our hands. Towing ships in Tekija are ready again after replacing the personnel which had deserted.

In the course of operation "Wassernixe", Group "Stelter" was, as reported previously, twice heavily attacked by Russian and Rumanian surprise fire and suffered many casualties. Our ammunition is used up. Group "Stelter" together with Group "Rehe" plans to fight its way out. This group is heavily shelled from Turnu Severin and is being opposed by strong Russian forces and partisans. Group "Rehe" has at its disposal only three guns and six mortars. Anti-tank weapons are not available. Near Turnu Severin the enemy is making preparations probably for crossing the Danube.

14 Sept. 1944

No dropping of mines in the Danube was reported on 13 Sept; eleven mines were swept.

On 11 Sept. 282 vessels sailed in both directions on the upper Danube.

According to a report by Air Force Command Southeast, the Special Representative Danube has agreed that the mine control by minesweeping planes is discontinued due to lack of fuel. In the future these planes will be sent on missions only after dropping of mines becomes known.

VII. Situation Far East.

Nothing to report.

15 Sept. 1944

Items of Political Importance.

In spite of repeated denials, the British Foreign Minister has nevertheless flown to Quebec and arrived there last night. Present political relations between the Anglo-Americans and the Russians are the probable cause.

The Commander in Chief, Navy left for Headquarters "Wolfsschanze". The reason for this trip is the proposal to be made to the Fuehrer concerning the withdrawal of the Northern Army Group by the Chief, Army General Staff. Decision in this matter is to be made in the very near future.

Conference on the Situation with the Chief, Naval Staff at 1115.

I. Naval Staff, Operations Division, Naval Air and Air Force Liaison Section reports that the last fighters have now been withdrawn from the Baltic countries and White Ruthenia to Reich territory; there is no more fighter protection. Since this is especially regrettable because the major attack against the Northern Army Group has started yesterday and since special protection is necessary for evacuation transports. The commander in Chief, Navy must be instructed concerning the situation.

II. Naval Staff, Operations Division, Operations Branch North reports that the intended laying of emergency barrages was carried out according to a telephone report.

III. The Naval Shore Commander Pas de Calais has requested ammunition for the fortress Dunkirk. An attempt will be made to supply ammunition by PT boats in the coming night.

IV. Naval Staff, Operations Division, Chief of Operations Branch transmits the information that the Quartermaster of the Northern Army Group regards the supply by sea to be sufficient as well as the answer received from the Army General Staff concerning the fortification of Memel (no fortress construction but a fortified place within the scope of the East Prussian defense system).

V. Naval Staff, Chief of Communications Division makes a preliminary report on the loss of boxes containing cypher material to be transported by air to the Channel Islands. Apparently a treacherous member of the crew dropped the boxes

15 Sept. 1944

over French territory and then made a parachute jump. The boxes contained the cipher to be used during the month of September. Thereby the enemy might have the means to decipher the radiograms sent during the first week of September.

Change of the cipher was ordered immediately; the entire matter should be investigated thoroughly; it should be made sure that important cypher material will never again be shipped in such a dangerous manner

VI. The Chief, Naval Staff reports:

a. According to an agent's report, the Fusage (presumably an American airborne organization - Tr.N.) is not intended for action in the northern area, but will support airborne landings in the Holland area or in the Heligoland Bight. This information is relayed to the front commands.

b. Naval Attache Helsinki has pointed out that the esteem in which Marshall Mannerheim is held has declined considerably as the result of the peace negotiations with Moscow. The observation has been made that wide Finnish circles are ill disposed towards the new course taken by the government.

VII. Naval Staff, Special Weapons reports about intended operations with the small battle weapons becoming ready in a short while. A decision must be made especially about where the next "Molch" flotilla which will be ready on 20 Sept., is to be put into action. Present plans call for action by this flotilla in the southern area, too, similar to the first 50 "Molch" craft, 30 of which are at present on their way to Padua; the remaining are on their way to San Remo.

Chief, Naval Staff decides that this plan will be adhered to and that the necessary transport facilities are to be secured for 20 Sept. The final decision about their operation depends on the future developments.

The "Biber" craft becoming ready are to go to Denmark (Aarhus and Aalborg). The first 12 "Hechte" craft are to go to Frederikshavn.

Conference in a Restricted Circle.

VIII. Army Situation:

1. Western Front:

The heaviest fighting was in the Aachen area, Strong forces

15 Sept. 1944

of the 1st American Army succeeded in opening a wide gap in the fortifications south and southeast of Aachen. Fighting for the possession of the city is still going on.

Maastricht was lost as the result of an encircling enemy attack.

The 2nd British Army facing the 1st Parachute Army is making preparations for the continuation of the attack.

A new concentration of the enemy has been observed in the northern part of Luxembourg.

The fight about the Channel fortresses is being continued.

American forces are continuing their attack near Pont a Mousson and Luneville and are gaining more territory. Our counterattacks were not effective.

Between Nancy and Vesoul the German troops are retreating to the Thaon - Dompere - Dammartin- Bourlonne line.

See-saw fighting near Lure.

Strong attacks on Epinal, Lure and Belfort as well as major attacks on Luxeuil by American Division are expected.

2. Italian Front:

In the area northeast of Florence the enemy attacked our lines on a wide front with strong forces supported by at least 80 batteries. In bitter fighting our troops succeeded - due to exemplary cooperation with the artillery - in repulsing all attacks and with the last reserves to mop up nearly all penetrations by evening. In the evening hours Monte Calvi was lost. Both sides suffered heavy casualties during the hard fighting.

On 14 Sept., too, the enemy continued his major attack on the Adriatic coast with unrelenting fierceness on the part of his artillery and airforce. The strength of the enemy airforce surpasses all imagination. A break-through of the enemy was prevented in very bloody fighting, but a group of his tanks succeeded in advancing to south of Lorenzo. Our local reserves and remaining strong points continue to put up bitter resistance. Our troops are strongly influenced by the shockingly great material superiority of the enemy and by the feeling of defenselessness in the face of the enemy airforce. The casualties and material losses are considerable.

15 Sept. 1944

3. Balkan Peninsula:

On the Peloponnesos partisan forces are taking over the areas evacuated by our troops; the southwestern part of the island of Sakinthos was likewise occupied by partisans.

The withdrawal of Bulgarian troops to the east and north east of the Prilep area was confirmed by air reconnaissance. Their retreat is blocked by our forces. The enemy evacuated Moldova and the heights east thereof ahead of our forces. In the rear of the German battalion advancing along the Danube road to the northeast, fighting is going on with the Rumanians moving in from the north. The Commandant Iron Gate reports enemy movements. The enemy is bringing up reinforcements to the Prahovo - Kladavo sector.

The Russian troop movements in Bulgaria appear to come off slowly due to difficulties in connection with the crossing of the Danube; this much was learned from radio reports incompletely deciphered.

4. Eastern Front:

Hungarian forces entered Arad and reached south of Nagy Varod the area 30 to 40 km south of the Hungarian-Rumanian border.

South of Cluj in the sector of the 2nd Hungarian Army, German forces expelled Russian troops from Turda.

In the area of Keszthely - Reghinul Sasac - Caliman Mountains our withdrawal movements are taking place according to plan.

At the front of Army Group Northern Ukraine the defensive battle near Sanok and Krosno is being continued. West of Dukla it was possible to close the gap that had developed and to cut off the Russian troops on the Slovakian border.

The fight for the Vistula bridgehead near Jozefow came to a close; the bulk of two infantry divisions was annihilated. At the Central Army Group, the day was marked by heavy defensive fighting in the Warsaw and Novgorod bridgeheads. The day ended with the loss of Novgorod.

The four remaining bridges connecting Warsaw and Praga were blown up in time.

The Narew bridge near Novgorod could be blown up, too. The Russians captured the city by assault. Our exemplarily

15 Sept. 1944

fighting troops were pushed back to the northern bank of the Narew.

In the sector of the Northern Army Group the enemy started the expected major attack in the Bauske, Modohn and Walk area with superior forces and with an ample supply of material. His attempted break-throughs were prevented in all three sectors. Deep penetrations could not be prevented. Our Air Force provided noticeable protection against an extraordinarily strong enemy air force.

IX. Naval Staff, Operations Division, Chief of Operations

Branch reports that, according to a communique from the Admiral for Special Duties at Headquarters, the order concerning the handling of Finnish ships is lacking in clarity due to the fact that the Fuehrer order refers to Finnish ships in Finland only. In order to remove all doubts the Commander in Chief, Navy has ordered that Finnish ships in German ports are to be detained.

Thereupon Naval Staff, Operations Division, Chief of Operations Branch called the attention of the Armed Forces High Command to the fact that these conclusions could be reached from the present orders of the Armed Forces High Command and from the situation report by the Admiral at the Fuehrer Headquarters on 14 Sept.

Naval Command Norway has sent the information by telegram that on account of the measures taken for the purpose of postponing departure of Finnish ships from Norway, the representative of Finnish interests already speaks of "delaying" and "retaining" action and has requested an interview with the Commander in Chief. This was to be expected in the course of time.

The Naval Command Norway was directed to continue retention of Finnish ships. The Armed Forces High Command was likewise informed and it was pointed out that countermeasures may be taken which could affect our evacuation transports passing through the Gulf of Bothnia. Further detention of Finnish ships is nevertheless not considered to be a dangerous matter.

The front commands and Naval Staff, Quartermaster Division, Shipping and Transport Branch are again reminded as per I op 28476/44 Gkdos. that until further directives are received, the present order of the Armed Forces High Command is valid according to which the seizure of the ships is to be prepared inconspicuously

15 Sept. 1944

Special Items.

I. Operation "Tanne Ost".

Last night the operation "Tanne Ost" has evidently started on time.

The last reports by the Naval Liaison Officer on Hogland say that the Finnish island commander has proposed to have the last remaining German soldiers evacuated to Tyters Island by Finnish patrol boats, if the German ship could not arrive before 0200 due to danger from air attacks. The island commander evidently is very anxious in seeing that all Germans have left the island by midnight.

In a talk, the island commander also hinted that he expects a discontinuation of the Moscow negotiations and a Russian surprise attack against Hogland. He regretted that German reserves did not land on the island in June.

According to the situation report at 1600, the harbor was clear of ships and the evacuation of arms and equipment had stopped. According to information given out by the island commander, the light arms are to be returned to the island; the 12cm field cannons were transported from the northeast side of the island to the center hill. Repeated air reconnaissance of the island by the Russians took place.

At 2000 the commander ordered an alert.

It is alarming that no reports at all have been received from our forces about the execution of the operation since 0200.

Naval Staff was solely informed by telephone from Admiral, Eastern Baltic that the Finns are putting up resistance after the landings in the harbor and on the northern coast were successfully accomplished.

At 0925 the first telegraphic report was received. It reads as follows:

- "1. Finns continue resistance; landing took place in the harbor and on the northern coast. Harbor in our hands. Land situation not yet reported.
2. One motor minesweeper and one tug were sunk; three mine clearance boats and one motor minesweeper were damaged.
3. Since 0700 continuous Russian air raids on returning minesweeping boats and landing vessels are taking place. Eighty planes are participating; eighteen of our planes are in the air.

15 Sept. 1944

4. Naval Artillery Battalion 535 and 629 are, as far as materiel and personnel are concerned, not strong enough for the task."

The report sounds very serious; the absence of reports about the land situation can only be explained thus that the intended Island Commander Captain Mecke (Navy) cannot make use of his radio transmitters. All reports so far received are from the naval forces at sea which, without doubt, could not completely observe happenings ashore before dawn.

The losses suffered by the naval forces point to considerable Finnish resistance. This places the operation into a completely different light. It was assumed that the Finns would put up no resistance at all or only quasi resistance. This presupposition evidently was foolish. Paragraph 4 of the report made by Admiral, Eastern Baltic can only be understood to mean that the naval troops put into action so far cannot carry through the operation against determined resistance due to the mountainous character of the island and due to their own light equipment.

At 1000 an advance report by Reich Security Central Office was transmitted according to which two submarine flotillas, eight torpedo boats, four torpedo boat chasers, twelve patrol boats, and three minesweepers departed from Kronstadt and Leningrad on 12 Sept. on westerly course.

At 1200 the following was learned about the situation after several telephone calls to Admiral, Eastern Baltic and Naval Command, Baltic: Captain Mecke has been requested to report; so far nothing was heard. About 1,400 men are ashore; a bridgehead, 500 meter deep, was gained. The greatest difficulty is caused by the Finnish anti-tank guns in the vicinity of the harbor. Dive bomber attacks on them are being carried out. Participation of our naval forces is impaired by enemy superiority in the air; during the day the naval landing craft cannot be kept at sea continuously.

The destroyers which apparently returned to Reval - in compliance with the operational order - after the landing was successful, assumed that they would not be needed anymore; to be sure, they would not have been in a position to reach the Finnish batteries stationed in the north part of the island with their artillery. (At the same time our troops in the harbor would have been endangered by shells flying over the mountains). The Russian air raids complicated matters very much; our few fighters had merely nuisance value and could not prevent the air attacks.

15 Sept. 1944

Naval Command Baltic intends to bring up reinforcements in the form of a naval artillery battalion from Gdynia during the coming night in spite of its little fighting value.

The Commander in Chief, Navy demands information about further assistance needed; resistance must be overcome by all means

At 1240 Naval Command Baltic transmits opinion held by Admiral, Eastern Baltic that engineer and alpine troops are particularly needed.

At 1305 this demand is relayed to the Commander in Chief, Navy who orders that Admiral, Eastern Baltic should, without hesitation put the PRINZ EUGEN into action, in case he needs her fighting power for the execution of the task.

At 1405 Chief, Naval Staff once more transmits to the Commanding Admiral, Naval Command Baltic the opinion of the Commander in Chief, Navy that all means are to be used which will further the successful completion of the operation. The Army General Staff is making ready a battalion of the 23rd Infantry Division stationed at Ahrensburg which should be moved by Admiral, Eastern Baltic to the scene of action as quickly as possible.

At noon the Finnish and Swedish radio broadcast an official report that a German officer demanded last night from the island commander that Hogland be handed over to German troops. After refusal of this demand, German naval forces have attempted landings at different places of the island; all of them have been repulsed by the Finnish fire with the exception of one small bridgehead. The Swedish radio adds that the feeling prevails in Finland that a state of war is now existing between Finland and Germany.

In the afternoon the Commander of the 3rd Minesweeper Flotilla arrived in Reval and according to a report by Admiral, Eastern Baltic made the following statement about events:

- "1. After refusal of the island commander to surrender the island, the troops attacked as ordered. At first landings took place according to plan; later, at dawn, due to heavier and better directed fire, greater difficulties arose. Finnish vessels in the narrow harbor complicated matters, too. Likewise ashore the attack progressed well during the hours of darkness; then casualties increased primarily caused by machine gun nests and anti-tank guns.
2. Motor minesweepers and minesweepers landed the soldiers with

15 Sept. 1944

the exception of two minesweepers which were overcrowded due to the fact that one minesweeper had to drop out en route due to engine trouble. At dawn the second wave of naval landing craft was forced out of the harbor into a mine barrage. Two naval landing craft sank after striking mines. The greater part of the crew was rescued by a motor minesweeper. Fire from the gun carriers in support of the landing was not well directed. The gun carriers were to ward off PT boats at the same time. According to a still incomplete report, two Finnish PT boats were attacked; a motor minesweeper and a tug were sunk by torpedoes. Later, six PT boats were repulsed at the northern point of Hogland by fire from motor minesweepers, gun carriers and minesweeping boats. It was observed that beginning at 0700 heavy Russian dive bomber attacks took place on the northern part of the island, whereto the landed troops had probably retreated after their simultaneous attack on the central and northern heights had failed. It is to be feared that the troops are isolated from the harbor and are suffering from lack of ammunition.

3. Participation of destroyers was not possible in spite of the best intentions by the Flotilla Commander since the dark rocky background did not offer any targets and because the shelling was restricted to the eastern part of the harbor; there was no chance to support the fight, since there was danger of shooting over the heights and thereby endangering our own landings. Explosions of shells fired by minesweeping boats from the eastside took place near the destroyers. At dawn the destroyers would have been exposed to enemy air raids in the narrow channels. (See sea charts No. 151 and 152 with the shoals marked only on this scale chart and with designation of destroyer passages with a narrow approach running to the north between Great and Small Tyters Island). Shelling from the northeast was not possible due to the nearby declared area and the general fire direction toward the harbor. Therefore this was not ordered by the Commander of the 3rd Minesweeper Flotilla.
4. Our air raid on the northern summit was carried out at 1030 with good results; nothing is known about returning naval landing craft and gun carriers since they were dispersed by heavy air raids which could only partially be intercepted by our fighters. Air reconnaissance over the island was incomplete due to increasing enemy air activity. The 5th PT boat Flotilla is sailing at 1630 to ascertain the situation on the northern part of the island."

Five boats of the 3rd Torpedo Boat Flotilla are sailing for Ahrensburg to call for additional Army forces; at 1530 five PT boats will sail for Hogland with one assault boat each to

15 Sept. 1944

reconnoiter the situation of Group Mecke.

The assault boats shall eventually bring ashore ammunition and food supplies.

Since it is possible that Finland will declare a state of war on account of our attack on Hogland, it will be necessary to care for the protection of our return transports which have so far been running unmolested through the Gulf of Bothnia. Commander in Chief, Navy wishes that Admiral, Eastern Baltic receives a corresponding order. Special attention should be given to the steamer MONTE ROSA carrying a large number of wounded.

At 2307 Admiral, Eastern Baltic gives out the first complete survey of the different stages of the operation with "Gkdos. 4358". It has the following wording:

- "1. According to latest air reconnaissance the fighting on the island has ceased. PT boats with orders to reconnoiter close to the coast did not notice any fighting.
2. On the basis of reports already received, it can be said that the operation was carried out in the shortest possible time with great energy, especially in the beginning, in the dark of the night and with unusual difficulties. A number of very courageous single performances were accomplished by flotilla commanders, commanders and soldiers of the three services.
3. All those familiar with Finnish conditions especially on the island did not expect serious and tenacious Finnish resistance. Reports by the Naval Liaison Officer lent support to this assumption. Likewise the telegram sent by the Naval Attache upon leaving Finland gave no reason to suspect resistance. Therefore the landing was confronted with difficulties - the mountainous character and fortress-like defenses of the island - which could not be solved by troops assembled upon short notice regardless of their bravery. The operation was unduly hastened by reports about the departure of Russian naval forces, about the imminent termination of Finnish-Russian negotiations, about increased enemy reconnaissance over the island and about Russian surprise actions expected on the day set for the completion of our evacuation. This key point was not to fall into Russian hands. There had been continuous talk about the removal of arms. The latest report about re-emplacement of guns and the alert-declaration on the island were felt to be aimed at the threat of a Russian landing. The first phase of the landing showed

15 Sept. 1944

that with only formal resistance the occupation would have met with success without any difficulty. Fate denied the happy ending to the operation and to our brave fighters. Heavy casualties were suffered.

4. The repetition of this operation would have to be approached from an entirely different angle, on an entirely different scale. Since the assemblance of forces for a repetition of the operation would take at least several days, the failure of today must be accepted for the time being and the political developments in the Baltic states must be awaited."

II. Armed Forces High Command, Operations Staff received report "28513/Gkdos." about the demolition of the harbor of Ostend.

III. The Naval Shore Commander Pas de Calais, Rear Admiral Frisius, after being reminded several times, answered the question whether and under what conditions he would take over the command of the fortress Dunkirk, as follows:

"I am willing to take over the post as Fortress Commander under the following conditions:

1. Exclusive authority also over the 226th Infantry Division to secure unified command not existing at present.
2. Removal of Lieutenant General von Kluge as soon as possible, otherwise immediate release from his command.
3. Release of Colonel von Wittstadt, who was made Fortress Commander by the Fuehrer.
4. Everything must be done to secure ammunition supply. I emphasize that in the preparation of ground defense much was neglected which cannot be made good, particularly in regard to artillery. Furthermore it is pointed out that at present only weak forces are opposing us which, however, it is expected will be reinforced. Therefore considerable set-backs are possible simultaneously with my taking over the command."

IV. Bureau of Naval Armament, War Economy Branch, submits to the competent offices an order by the Reich Commissioner for the Four Years' Plan concerning the dispersal and evacuation of goods from the occupied western territory with priority rating. Copy filed in War Diary, Part B, V.

V. At 1255 a heavy air raid by 40 to 50 four-engined bombers took place on the TIRPITZ in the Kaa Fjord; apparently considerable damage was caused (see Situation Norway, Northern

15 Sept. 1944

Waters). Naval Command Norway thereupon requests Naval Staff to take steps at Armed Forces High Command, respectively High Command, Air for the assignment of sufficient fighter portection. Defense against high flying attacks by artillery barrages alone is not sufficient. A corresponding request by the 1st Task Force to the 5th Air Force was without success; the Air Force has no forces at its disposal.

On the same evening the request was submitted to High Command, Air; since the High Command, Air likewise has no fighter forces at its disposal due to the difficult task of defending the Reich, the decision must be made by the Armed Forces High Command which will be instructed accordingly.

VI. Naval Command Norway asks for an allocation of 1,000 additional coastal mines "A" for a planned barrage in the waters of the Oslo Fjord; it was granted. (Sk1 28535).

VII. Naval Command Norway was, in connection with the plan of withdrawing the 20th Mountain Army behind the Lyngen position, requested by "I Op 2949 Chefs." to report the possibilities of increasing ferrying services at point Lyngen Fjord and to state to what extent the time needed for the ferrying across of a division can be reduced thereby.

VIII. Armed Forces High Command issued the following basic order "773391Chefs". for the evacuation of the Aegean Sea:

"1. The Fuehrer has authorized the evacuation of personnel and material from the Aegean Islands and the Dodecanese in proportion to the available sea and air transport facilities.

The Commanding General, Southeast is to establish the evacuation priorities. It is essential to evacuate at first the combat troops, the most valuable equipment (assault guns, tanks, anti-aircraft artillery, heavy anti-tanks guns and tractors' and supply (fuel and scarce ammunition).

2. The passive behavior of the British towards our withdrawal from Greece and from the islands permits the conclusion that demands made by the Russians for the entire territory of the Balkan Peninsula have been granted

It is not in our interest to prevent conflicts and disturbances between communist and national forces and between Anglo-Americans and Russians. In agreement with Ambassador Neubacher, advantage is there fore to be taken of the conflict between the hostile groups in connection with our

15 Sept. 1944

withdrawals; every skirmish between the two groups must be furthered as much as possible even after our withdrawal."

IX. Notes on the armament conference of the Navy on 6 Sept. 1944 are filed in War Diary, Part B, V.

X. Naval Staff, Intelligence Division submits excerpt 5450 Gkdos. to the front commands regarding evaluation of the enemy situation by Army General Staff, Foreign Armies West as well as the report 5376 Gkdos. on the enemy situation in the east of August 1944. Both reports contain nothing essentially new and were filed in D.8.a.

XI. Naval Staff, Communications Division submits a summary about the information gained about the enemy by radio interception in Special Radio Intercept Report 37/44.

XII. At the request of the Commanding General, South-west, Naval Command Italy gave orders to the 7th Defense Division to organize immediately former crew members into three companies of one hundred men each and to send them to Spezia for the relief of SS units.

Situation 15 Sept.

I. Situation West Area:

1. Enemy Situation:

In the area of the 15th and 19th Group only medium to slight air activity took place without any noticeable concentration.

Three British units and one American steamer were located by wireless.

2. Own Situation:

Encircled Fortresses:

Last night the mining of the naval harbor and the blowing-up of the submarine shelters in Brest were completed.

The enemy advanced to within 1,500 meters of the command post of the Naval Shore Commander, Hard fighting on all fronts.

15 Sept. 1944

According to an evening report by the Fortress Commander, the enemy could not achieve any great new successes against the doggedly fighting German troops who defend themselves with Infantry arms only since all artillery guns have been put out of action. In the eastern part of the fortress most severe street fighting is raging amidst smoldering ruins resulting in heavy artillery shelling, were repulsed at the main defense line; the enemy suffered heavy casualties.

In Lorient lively enemy artillery shelling of our positions. Our batteries shelled camp huts and enemy infantry positions as well as partisan concentrations near Caudan.

Two auxiliary minesweeping boats and two submarine chasers occupied patrol positions; two harbor defense boats transported personnel to Belle Ile. The patrol vessel VP "230" was underslung after touching ground and beached on Belle Ile for caulking.

In St. Nazaire an advancing strong German combat group mopped up two strong points. Our losses were slight compared with seventy two enemy dead; a large amount of arms and ammunition was captured.

In La Rochelle an artillery duel took place between Oleron and enemy batteries south of La Rochelle.

No important reports came in from Flanders. According to an enemy radio report, the harbor Zeebrugge is still occupied by some German naval forces; the supply roads are ostensibly within the range of German artillery. Three PT boats and one naval landing craft were made ready for transporting the requested ammunition to the area of Naval Shore Commander Pas de Calais; three naval landing craft to be sent to Dunkirk ran aground near Willemsdorf and had to return to Dordrecht.

Supply by air is to be carried out during the coming night; Dunkirk will be supplied by three, Boulogne by three and Cape Gris Nez by two He 111 planes.

II. North Sea, Norway, Northern Waters.

1. North Sea:

In the evening numerous ASV radio locations and bombing raids took place in the area of the Dutch coast up to the

15 Sept. 1944

East Frisian Islands.

Late reports say that two more enemy PT boats (in all three) were sunk in the PT boat fight off Terschelling in the evening of 14 Sept.

Barrage K 2 consisting of 82 coastal mines "A" was laid off Norderney.

Last night a sabotage attempt with adhesive charges was made against three blocking ships in Rotterdam destined for Flushing and Rotterdam; the ships were damaged.

At noon an air raid took place on Flushing-Breskens, in which land installations were damaged; the ferrying service was discontinued until evening and several small vessels were sunk.

At 1622 an air raid took place on the Rhine Flotilla in Veere; slight damage to the harbor.

Yesterday the following were ferried across the Scheldt estuary; 2,875 soldiers, 45 wounded, 75 guns, 423 vessels, 616 horses and one railroad battery.

The small battle weapons operations against the "Kreuzschanz" lock, Antwerp, will be carried out in the coming night.

2. Norway, Northern Waters:

Enemy Situation:

Russian reconnaissance in the Northern Waters was comparatively lively; reports were received mentioning the occupation of the Elvenes Fjord and Lang Fjord. In the evening two Russian PT boats were probably in the Varanger Fjord.

Radio traffic on the British waves lengths in the Northern Waters was above average, intense and urgent. At 2222 Hammerfest located a British vessel in 2738; at night an American vessel in radio traffic with Reykjavik was indistinctly located in AF 5710.

Own Situation :

In the forenoon, our air reconnaissance observed in Archangel by sight: two destroyers, one corvet and six freighters.

At 1255 a heavy air raid took place on the TIRPITZ in the Kaa Fjord (see Special Items V.)

15 Sept. 1944

The ship was hit in the forecastle by a bomb and had several near misses. The whole extent of the damage cannot yet be stated. The supply vessel KEHRWIEDER, a coal vessel and a heating barge were sunk. During the raid several parachute mines were dropped in the Alta Fjord. So far only two crashes of planes were reported.

In the morning a convoy returning from Petsamo was attacked in the Varanger Fjord exit by four Russian PT boats and fifteen battle planes. One PT boat was sunk, eleven prisoners were made. The patrol vessel V "5105" which was beached north of Stadtlandet on 12 Sept. sank in a towing-off attempt.

The sabotage hide-out which was raided on 12 Sept. contained submersibles of latest construction which apparently were to be used for attacking adhesive mines.

III. Skagerrak, Baltic Sea Entrances, Baltic Sea.

1. Enemy Situation:

In the forenoon two enemy boats were detected north of Lavansaari in the usual Russian radio traffic and south of Vigrund mine clearance activity by twenty Russian boats was observed by the Air Force.

From Tyters several salvos were fired at two PT boats.

Very lively air activity took place in connection with the operation Hogland. The naval ferry barge F "499" was sunk in the course of attacks on the ferry barge group "Mayer".

2. Own Situation:

Admiral Skagerrak:

Patrol and mine clearance missions along the West Jutland coast and in the Kattegat were carried out as planned. Two mines were swept in the northern exit of the Samsø Belt, one of which was 20 meters off the lightship SCHULTZGRUND causing slight damage.

Five hundred eighteen coastal mines "A" were dropped in the Aalbaeck Bay.

15 Sept. 1944

Central and Western Baltic:

By day lively Russian air activity took place in the area of Memel - Liepaja - Ventspils with gunfire raids on our ships; only slight damage.

Sixty-nine boats and two special minesweepers were on mine clearance missions; eleven mines were swept.

Admiral. Eastern Baltic:

About the events in connection with operation "Tanne Ost" see Special Items I.

Yesterday at 1530 the Commander of the 9th Defense Division departed from Helsinki on the naval ferry barge F "3", the last vessel leaving the port. The Commander in Chief of the Finnish Navy General Valve gave him his honorary escort on a Finnish PT boat. - It was possible to evacuate all naval stores from Helsinki to Kotka.

The barrage patrol near Porkalla was withdrawn from the Finnish territorial waters. The damage to the eastern net barrage was repaired by the placing of twelve new nets.

The emergency barrages were placed in accordance with plans after 1800. The Finnish Liaison Officer was informed of the intention at 1730.

IV. Submarine Warfare.

The Commander of the 1st Submarine Flotilla reported from Brest by radiogram: "The submarine base of the 9th Submarine Flotilla was subdued after a brave fight, lasting for several days. Fighting is going on in front of the Navy School. - I hereby report the end of the Brest submarine base and sign off. Hail to the Fuehrer! "

According to radio interception, the British Admiralty at 1640 sent instructions by radio to two convoys sailing simultaneously from England. Direct issuance of orders by the British Admiralty was last observed in connection with a PQ convoy at the end of March; therefore immediate air reconnaissance is requested. The submarine group "Grimm" (six submarines) in the Northern Waters is being transferred to the southwest at high speed.

15 Sept. 1944

Submarines patrolling the Gulf of Finland reported several Finnish vessels and a Swedish destroyer south of the Aaland Islands.

Considerable damage was caused in air raids on the shipyard at Salamis in the Mediterranean; the submarine U "565" was damaged by a close miss. Admiral, Aegean Sea has requested permission to leave the submarines in the Aegean Sea for the escort of evacuation transports.

According to a Turkish broadcast of 11 Sept. two groups of crews (two officers, eleven men and two officers, twenty one men respectively) were interned in Turkey. Apparently they represent the crews of the last submarines in the Black Sea.

V. Aerial Warfare.

1. West Area:

Nothing to report.

2. Reich Territory:

By day about 160 enemy planes were over western Germany and Alsace. Eighty to one hundred four-engined planes were covering the area north of Norderney - Borkum up to the area Heligoland without attacking.

During the night single planes were over northern and north-western Germany; about one hundred minelaying planes flew over northern Scotland - southern Sweden-Bornholm down to the Danzig Bay. About forty Mosquitoes in flight over Hanover. Berlin was raided at about 0200. Likewise a heavy air raid took place on Kiel by five hundred bombers approaching via Flensburg; simultaneous mining of the Luebeck and Rostock Bay.

One hundred and fifty more enemy planes coming from the Soviet Union carried out raids in Hungary, primarily on Debreczin.

3. Mediterranean Theater:

Eleven hundred enemy planes were on missions over the land front carrying out raids against bridges and traffic installations. The usual enemy reconnaissance and attacks took place; likewise thirty two planes supplied the partisans by night.

15 Sept. 1944

On 14 Sept. air reconnaissance established the presence of four torped boats, one convoy boat, seven PT boats, ten small war vessels, five coastal freighters (in all 5,000 tons) and a large number of small vessels at Varna.

4. East Area:

On 14 Sept. 699 of our planes and 4,940 enemy planes were on missions. We lost 9 planes; 99 enemy planes were shot down,

VI. Situation Mediterranean.

1. German Naval Command Italy:

Enemy Situation:

French battle ships, including the LORRAINE and nine cruisers, returned to Toulon according to a radio broadcast.

British air reconnaissance was active over the Gulf of Genoa and the Adriatic Sea; slight traffic by single sailing ships in Gibraltar. A cruiser of the FIDJI class arrived in Gibraltar on 14 Sept.

Own Situation:

At noon the inland area of Ventimiglia and the coastal road were shelled by a destroyer. In a shelling of Imperia on 14 Sept. a naval landing craft was damaged by a 15 cm shell.

The convoy Genoa - Spezia consisting of naval landing craft had a fight with enemy PT boats that were on watch near Cape Mesco. Later on, the same PT boats shelled the harbor of Sestri Levante. Five two-men and two one-man assault boats on missions against defense forces on the French south coast and advanced to fourteen miles southeast of Nice without contacting the enemy. Twenty nine additional coastal mines "A" were laid off the Tagliamento estuary.

2. Area of Naval Group South:

Enemy Situation:

In the forenoon British air reconnaissance reported small vessels off Santurin - Milos and Cos.

15 Sept. 1944

. Own Situation:

a. Adriatic Sea: At 1350 an army post sighted four transports (3 to 5,000 tons) with high superstructure off Cape Ploca at a distance of twenty miles on northwesterly course. In the evening the 24th PT Boat Flotilla sailed on a mission against transports in the island area of Dugiotok.

Last night three PT boats starting from Split were on coast patrol; one motor cutter was sunk and ten partisans were taken prisoner.

b. Aegean Sea: At 0500 the war transport PELIKAN was attacked in the harbor of Santurin by fast, camouflaged British motor ships; one ship was sunk and two prisoners were taken; our casualties were slight.

The war transport ERPEL with submarine chaser "2171" did not arrive in Suda; since a report came in from Cape Spata about sighting a burning ship on 14 Sept. at 0332, its loss must be assumed.

At 1415 a triple torpedo fan missed the submarine chaser UJ "2110" five miles north of Scopelos.

A patrol boat of the Coastal Defense Flotilla Crete sank in the harbor of Paros in the afternoon of 14 Sept. after being attacked by gunfire and mortar.

Last night and all morning heavy air raids took place in the Attica area and especially on airfields near Athens. In these raids the torpedo boat TA "14" was sunk and the vessel GD "91" and the war transport MANNHEIM were heavily damaged at Salamis. Heavy damage was caused to the Naval arsenal, shipyards and warehouses.

At the same time on hundred Liberators carried out raids against the Salonika area. The Coastal Defense Flotilla Peloponnesos continued to operate successfully against partisan shipping.

c. Danube Situation: In connection with the operation "Donauelfe" the Army has again gone over to the attack.

New buoys were laid in the channel of the Danube by Group "Iron Gate". The Group reached Drancova in the evening of 14 Sept.; two gun carriers and one river mineclearing boat are ready for firing near Moldova. The situation with regard to operation "Wassernixe" has become more acute. Tekija and Kladovo were heavily shelled. Group "Stelter" sent a most urgent report in the forenoon of 14 Sept. and scuttled its

15 Sept. 1944

vessels after using up all ammunition. The crews were incorporated in the Combat Group "Rehe".

Group "Rehe" reported that an enemy landing took place near Vrbica during the night of 13 Sept.

No new mines were dropped in the river. Six mines were cleared by vessels and two by minesweeping planes.

One tugboat each sank after striking mines at km 1435 and 1805.

On account of the precarious situation in the Baltic Sea, High Command, Air, Operations Staff has ordered the transfer to Reich territory of two minesweeping squadrons from the area of Air Force Command Southeast.

Minesweeping missions on the Danube will be carried out with the remaining mine clearance squadron.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL